

THE BIBLE

Beacon Light of History

Albert Field Gilmore

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THE BIBLE
Beacon Light of History



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES
In the Middle Distance, the Temple Area

THE BIBLE

Beacon Light of History

by ALBERT FIELD GILMORE, *Litt.D.*

Author of EAST AND WEST OF JORDAN, YES, 'TIS ROUND, etc.

Boston  Chicago

ASSOCIATED AUTHORS

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To
MY WIFE
DAVYE MOORE GILMORE

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Foreword

THE purpose of this volume is to set forth facts about the background, sources, authorship, growth, canon, and translation of the Bible. It deals with the evolution of "The Book" from its earliest beginnings to the point of development where we now find it. In that vast field where first-hand investigation of original sources has not been possible, the author has chosen from eminent scholars those conclusions which appear logical and authoritative. As scholars disagree, many questions about the source, authorship, period, and circumstances of the various writings are still unsettled. These controversies are not entered into, but where a decision is necessary, that conclusion is accepted which appears most authoritative and to represent the preponderance of well-considered opinion. There is no doctrinal discussion of the teachings of the Bible, no effort to promote any specific interpretation of its passages. It is the purpose of the author to deal with its history rather than with its message, in the hope and expectation that through a better understanding of the background and evolution of the Bible, its message may take on for the reader a deeper, a more spiritual significance.

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ALBERT FIELD GILMORE

Boston, December 1, 1935

THE BIBLE
Beacon Light of History

Introduction

THE Bible is still the world's best seller. More copies of the Bible are sold than of any other book, and its distribution is world-wide. No other book has ever reached the popularity of the Bible, and for none other has the popularity been sustained century after century. It is the most outstanding of all books, because its message is of the greatest importance to mankind. It is indeed *The Book*. An appealing story, told by James Moffatt, states that Sir Walter Scott, after he had come, because of impaired vision, to depend upon others to read to him, one evening said to Lockhart, his son-in-law, "Read from the Book"; and to Lockhart's query, "What book?" Sir Walter replied, "Need you ask? There is but One."

To untold millions, the Bible has come to be the One Book which above all others conveys to its readers the comfort, assurance, and heartening for which humanity so desperately longs. It is the beacon light in the darkness of human experience which guides the weary and disconsolate traveler to the goal of his heart's desire. It points the way to that form of salvation which includes freedom from all that constricts and encumbers human experience.

Under whatsoever adverse circumstances one may find himself, in the sacred pages of the Bible will be found the word that cheers and strengthens, that bids the needy look up to the Father of All, who cares with never-failing love and compassion for all His children.

Here is a book written during a period of more than a thousand years by numerous authors — many unknown

—yet presenting an unmistakable unity throughout its entire length. It sprang from an obscure people, small in numbers, of limited outlook, and weak in worldly influence as peoples go.

Yet they produced a book which, alone, has exerted a more profound influence upon the world than any other, yes, than all other books combined that have ever been written. Furthermore, its influence has steadily grown, and today is greater than ever.

As the history of the development of a people in their search for God, the Bible is wholly unique. So great has been its influence upon civilization, that the question may well be raised as to the source of this mighty power. Why has the Bible become so potent a factor in shaping the trend of civilization? What is the source of its influence?

And the response is, because it answers the most searching, the most important questions of the human heart. It satisfies the deepest yearnings in its assurance that God is, that He is ever present, and is available to meet the human needs; that He is to be successfully approached through the medium of righteous prayer. It unfolds through progressive revelation the nature of God, His relation to man, and His government of the universe. It deals with every phase of human experience, with the problems of all classes and races, of childhood, youth, and old age, furnishing for each a sure guide and way of life.

The literature of the Bible is of great variety and of highest quality. Within its pages will be found myth and legend, history and fiction, poetry and drama, allegory and parable, all united into a symmetrical whole bound together by a golden thread of spiritual truth.

It presents an extraordinary galaxy of portraits of important personages, men and women, of great intellectual strength as well as spiritual vision, of great leaders, as well

as of weaklings. It deals with rich and poor, with potentate and beggar, with high and low, with saint and sinner, in short, with every walk of life, shedding for each the same light of unchanging truth, in which all prepared to receive it may find salvation from their mortal restrictions.

It records the life, teachings, and works of one who, alone, has changed human thought in greater degree than any other personage who has lived on this planet. William Lyon Phelps, for many years Yale's noted professor and publicist, has declared that as between a college education and a knowledge of the Bible, if but one were possible, he would prefer the latter.

The strength and weakness of human nature are as dramatically presented as in the most successful efforts of modern histrionic art. In an appealing variety of settings are presented intimate pictures of family life, the joys and sorrows, the struggles, triumphs, and defeats, which then, as now, constitute so large a part of human experience.

We listen to the solemn vows of priest and prophet, of lawgivers and potentates. We read of great battles. We hear the shouts of victory and the cries of defeat. In short, we find in these well-stored pages the whole drama of life, which depicts in varied colors and with matchless skill the struggle of a people from the darkness of materialism into the full triumph of spiritual exaltation. As history, as drama, as poetry, as philosophy, it is incomparable.

While it may be said that the appeal of the Bible to the heart is simple, to the intellect it is complex. To reach the heart of its message, it must be studied prayerfully, read and reread, for its inspired passages contain deeplying truths that no mere scanning will reveal. It is indeed *The Book*, to be read, studied, digested by all who

would find the true way of life, by all who would live in right relations with their fellow men. It is the *vade mecum* for the pilgrim on life's journey, indispensable to the questing traveler. The poet has happily and truly said of it:

Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!
Star of eternity! The only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and join the coast of bliss securely.

I

The Bible in the News

WITH increasing frequency the Bible is finding its way onto the front page of many a leading newspaper of the world. And the reason is this: The spade of the archaeologist is turning up important witnesses of the long past in the form of libraries of clay tablets, potsherds, papyri, and other objects, inscribed with written records of a civilization reaching far back into the shadows of antiquity.

Modern scholars are now able to decipher these inscriptions, although often written in characters that have not been in use for thousands of years. The result of all this is a corroboration of facts recorded in the Bible that is having a tremendous influence in strengthening faith in the accuracy of the Scripture narrative. And what is even more important, this enhanced faith in the historic accuracy of the Bible is greatly increasing faith in its spiritual message.

Can one doubt, then, the importance of the contribution to the welfare of mankind which is resulting from the labor of those faithful men and women who, under burning skies, often in the midst of desert hardships, have persisted in the pursuit of the modern science of archaeology?

When new discoveries are made, items are of almost daily occurrence in the press, telling of the discoveries. Now it is ancient Babylonia; again it is Lachish, a city of southern Palestine, which gives up its long-buried secrets. On the potsherds found near Lachish are inscriptions

written in ink in the Hebrew language, dealing with events of the time of Jeremiah, and it is believed that when finally translated they will shed much light upon that important period of Jewish history.

Lachish is mentioned many times in the Bible narrative, its history extending over a long period, from the joining of the city in a coalition carried on by the King of Jerusalem against the Gibeonites (Joshua 10). The campaign carried on by Sennacherib against Lachish is commemorated by a sculpture from Nineveh, now deposited in the British Museum.

The discovery at Tel el-Amarna, in Egypt, nearly forty years ago, of tablets inscribed in cuneiform characters, gave the first great impetus to, or at least an intensified interest in, modern archaeology. The inscriptions on these tablets when translated were found to be messages written by kings of Syria and Palestine to the Pharaohs of that period, 1400-1360, B.C.

Ten years later, at Boghazkeui, Asia Minor, were found other tablets, which remained untranslated until after the Great War. These inscriptions, it is found, refer to the Hittites of the Old Testament, and tell of Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah. Also they recite the inveighing of Ezekiel against the wickedness of Jerusalem, when that robust prophet reminded the people that their Holy City was founded by heathen Amorites and Hittites. Thus is established the fact that these tribes inhabited territory in the south of Palestine.

Sir Flinders Petrie has added much to our knowledge of the past through his untiring labors during half a century. Amid the ruins of a Semitic temple on a mountain in the Sinaitic peninsula, he discovered the earliest alphabetical writing yet known. These inscriptions have been assigned to a period between 1850 and 1800 B.C.

Of even greater importance is a discovery made a few

years ago at Ras Shamra, on the coast of Northern Syria. Amid the ruins of an ancient temple was found a library of clay tablets written in cuneiform characters, some in Sumerian, others in the Babylonian conventional form. Also, other tablets were written in a then unknown language of twenty-seven characters, as compared with the numerous literal combinations of the older Babylonian methods. In "New Bible Evidence," Sir Charles Marston relates how Professor Baur, of Halle, following the method of deciphering a cryptogram, described by Edgar Allan Poe in "The Gold Bug," discovered what letter of the alphabet was represented by each of the twenty-seven characters. The inscription was found to be in ancient Hebrew, and the date of the tablets between 1400 and 1350, B.C. While it is yet too early to estimate the full significance of this discovery, it is certain that the inscriptions relate to incidents in the experiences of the Israelites in the Wilderness.

One of the most important discoveries of recent years was made by Professor Garstang in the ruins of Jericho. There researches carried on for a period of years have quite definitely fixed the date of the entrance of the Israelites into the Promised Land, as it is established with a degree of certainty that the city was overthrown by an earthquake at a date near 1400 B.C. Sir Charles Marston points out that since earthquakes are recorded in the Bible, Judges 5:4 and Psalms 114, it is not improbable that the divine Power may have used this instrumentality to destroy the walls of a heathen city. Be that as it may, it is a fact that the walls fell, and now modern research has fixed the date with reasonable accuracy. Professor Garstang has also uncovered proof of the accuracy of many accounts in the Bible incidents in the conquest of Canaan by Joshua.

But much more than this has been accomplished. In

Mesopotamia, for example, proof has been uncovered that during a flood the Euphrates inundated its valley some five thousand years ago. Thus the Bible story of Noah and his adventures receives corroboration.

The discoveries resulting from this type of research have gone far to establish accurate knowledge of the habits and life of the early nations. The work has been carried on by various groups, including several great universities. The Palestine Exploration Fund, an English institution, operating in Jerusalem and other sections of the Near East, has done much. The universities of Chicago, Pennsylvania, Harvard, Oxford, and others in America and Europe, are still carrying forward the exploration of many localities, which promise returns in uncovering the facts regarding important events which occurred in the long ago.

The purpose of this enterprise is primarily to learn of ancient peoples, and especially to gain knowledge of the race out of which came the Bible and the development of two forms of worship, the Jewish religion and Christianity. Whatever sheds light upon the early history of these important world movements not only satisfies the scholar in his search for historic facts, but it strengthens the faith of the countless followers who have sought the way of life through these teachings.

The rapidity with which new discoveries are made is almost startling. Quite recently, the press of the world was telling of the finding of a second-century manuscript, — to be sure, only a fragment, — apparently of a Gospel similar to the Fourth, perhaps of a Fifth. It was written on papyrus in the Greek language. It was found in Egypt, and now reposes in the British Museum, where competent scholars are deciphering it. If it proves to be what it was at first believed, it is the oldest extant manuscript of any portion of the Bible.

Only a few years ago, that veteran archaeologist, Sir Flinders Petrie, found in Egypt, on the site of an early Christian church, rolled up and posited in an earthen jar, a manuscript of the Fourth Gospel written in Coptic. It has now been translated and published in book form. While it varies somewhat in form of expression from the earliest Greek manuscripts, from which our present Bible was translated, in its fundamental statements there is no substantial disagreement.

In fact, an important result of the discovery in modern times of many manuscripts has been the substantial corroboration of the accepted facts of the New Testament, as they appear in the Authorized Version. While, to be sure, much light has been thrown on various passages by modern scholarship, the essential teachings have stood the test without loss of prestige.

These are a few of the items which we find on the front pages of the great world dailies; and they are accorded such prominence because of the intense and widespread interest in the Bible and its message. Mankind is longing for more definite knowledge of Deity, and faith is enhanced through the work of the archaeologist.

II

Where the Bible Originated

THE stage upon which has been played the greatest and most appealing drama in all times is the country which the Phoenicians called "Palestine." In size, it is quite small, having about the area of the State of New Hampshire, some seven thousand square miles. In length, from Mt. Hermon, in the North, to the Negeb, in the South, that is, "from Dan to Beersheba," it stretches scarcely more than one hundred and fifty miles. Its width varies, but has an average of not more than forty miles, a distance which, by one standing on the high places, from the Mediterranean Sea in the West to the Jordan in the East, may be swept at a single turn of the head. Within this small territory have occurred events which have changed and determined the whole course of human history.

Because of its geographical position, Palestine early became the main highway between East and West, between the two earliest civilizations, that is, between Egypt, in the Nile valley, and Babylonia, in the valley of the Euphrates.

Before recorded history, the trails across Esdraclon, the level plain reaching from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, were trod by camel and donkey trains, in the service of enterprising merchants; by hordes of armed men urged on by monarchs in search of conquest, to conquer and possess lands of wealth and power.

Here came and went Egyptian and Syrian, Babylonian and Macedonian, Greek and Roman, Saracen, Crusader,

and Turk. Here also came Napoleon to satisfy his love of conquest. But it was left to Allenby with his Anzacs, during the Great War, finally to break the power of Islam, and liberate, we hope forever, from the Star and Crescent, the land, cradle of Christianity, long in bondage to a non-Christian rule.

It seems strangely anomalous that the seat of Christianity, the country whence sprang he who has been hailed Saviour and Messiah, should have remained so long in the hands of a Moslem ruler. And now the intelligent and sympathetic rule of Britain, under a mandate from the League of Nations, is bringing to the harassed and poverty-stricken land a peace and prosperity to which it has long been a stranger.

It seems a strange concatenation of human affairs that a territory which is commonly known as the Holy Land should have been the scene of so much strife and bloodshed. Prior to the advent of the Man of Nazareth, this condition may be attributed to its position between East and West. Since the founding of Christianity, its blood deluge has been largely due to the unholy conflicts between pagan and priest, between Moslem and Christian, and, alas, between groups of so-called Christians themselves. Now, under a beneficent rule, the old shackles are being broken, modern methods are supplanting outworn customs, and the lamp of education is dispelling the darkness of superstition and fear. A new sense of brotherhood is becoming felt, and with it a larger sense of liberty and equality.

The Zionist movement has made a strong appeal to many sympathizers throughout the world, but it seems as yet too early to make a considered judgment as to its wisdom and practicality. It is difficult to understand the logic of bringing to an area of the size of Palestine, already with a population of more than six hundred thou-

sand, scarcely able to wrest the barest living from a resistant soil, an immigration of one hundred thousand or more, looking for a permanent abiding place.

Topographically considered, Palestine presents a unique situation. An elevated ridge, extension of the Lebanon range to the North, runs centrally throughout most of the length of the country. Just below Galilee, however, the range is broken by a low-lying plain, which extends from the sea at Haifa, across the entire width of the country to the Jordan. This plain of Esdraelon, or valley of Jezreel, has been the stage for many scenes in the great drama which constitutes the history of this much harassed region. It is fertile and now intensively cultivated, much of it by the Zionist farmers. Next the sea lies the plain of Sharon, an extensive tract, where cultivation of citrous fruits has assumed large proportions. Near Jaffa, ancient Joppa, has been built the modern city of Tel Aviv, child of the Jewish influx.

Above the long range of foothills, the Shephelah, which borders the plain of Sharon, rise the highlands of Judaea, mountains some three thousand feet in height, which form the backbone of the country. To the eastward of this elevation, the land slopes rather sharply to the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, the lowest body of water in the world, nearly thirteen hundred feet below sea level. The river Jordan, taking its course southward from the Sea of Galilee, itself nearly seven hundred feet below sea level, runs through a great gash in the earth, the result, no doubt, of volcanic movements of the earth crust in the long ago.

The result of these unusual topographical features, is a variety of climate probably not found in so small a territory in any other part of the world. The mountainous region has a varied climate, hot in summer, with cold

and snow in winter. This is the region of grapes and olives.

The plain of Sharon, with a mild climate, produces excellent oranges and other sub-tropical products. The plain of Esdraelon is given over to the growing of wheat and other cereals. The Jordan valley has a distinctly tropical climate, with intense heat, and in consequence produces a variety of plants and fruits common to torrid regions. Industries, apart from agriculture and sheep husbandry, which are of the first importance, have been little developed. Under the stimulation of the British Government, however, manufactures are now being encouraged. A development on the Jordan is producing electrical power for a variety of enterprises, and preparations are being made for reclaiming the immense quantities of minerals contained in the waters of the Dead Sea. The value of these deposits has been assessed at a sum that seems quite incredible.

Because of its contour, Palestine has but few rivers, and, with the exception of the Jordan, they are of little consequence, for the most part running dry in summer. The Jordan, as a river, is unique. Starting from springs on the sides of Mt. Hermon, it takes its course to Lake Huleh, a shallow body of water overgrown with papyrus, a convenient hiding place, it is said, for those seeking escape from the hand of the law. From Lake Huleh, the stream rushes headlong, some ten and a half miles, to the Sea of Galilee, Lake Tiberias, where it is lost in the quiet waters. At the outlet of Galilee, it rushes downward in a course so winding that, in a distance of sixty-five miles between the Lake and the Dead Sea, its course is more than two hundred miles before it joins the waters of the Dead Sea. This "Sea of Salt," as it is termed, because of the great amount of mineral held in solution, has no outlet, a fact which accounts for the unparalleled

mineral deposit. So great is the buoyancy of the water, in consequence, that a swimmer cannot sink, but may sit in comfort, half submerged, on its surface.

To the east of Jordan, is a stretch of hill country where Bedouin farmers raise wheat and maintain large flocks of sheep and goats. This is the land of Moab, through which Moses led the Children of Israel from their wilderness wanderings toward the Promised Land. Just to the North are the ruins of several ancient cities of the Decapolis, founded by the Romans when masters of the territory.

To the East, stretches the desert of Arabia, across which, for untold centuries, have lumbered the camel trains, carrying to and fro the merchandise of commerce. Now to the North, between Damascus and Bagdad, motor traffic has been developed and airplanes reduce the long desert journey to a few comfortable hours. This region, now known as Transjordan, is a part of Iraq, an Arab country, set up by the League of Nations at the close of the Great War.

Such, in brief, is the scene of the greatest drama in religion. Here the Children of Israel spun the web of history described in the Old Testament. Here lived a people peculiarly gifted in spiritual perception, from whom, in their search for the One God, sprang one who has changed the course of civilization in greater degree than any other who has appeared on the earth.

III

Historical Survey

I. THE PEOPLE

NO ADEQUATE understanding of the growth and evolution of the Bible is possible without a consideration of the character, history, environment, and purpose of the people who produced it. To their racial tendencies, inheritances, traditions, and history must also be added the influence of the country in which, after much wandering, the Children of Israel finally settled.

The sources from which we draw their political and religious history are the Old Testament, the Apocryphal books, the works of Josephus, the Jewish historian, the Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions now easily read, references in the histories of Greece and Rome, and the Jewish Talmud and Mishnah.

Who were the Hebrews, whence came they, and what was their contribution to history as a clan or people? To make anything like an adequate answer to these questions, we must look far back to the earliest known history of the human race. The Hebrews are a branch of the Semitic race, descendants of Shem, son of Noah, as the tradition runs.

It is generally believed that the great desert of the Sinaitic peninsula was the home of the Semitic peoples, and from that cradle migrations were made by restless groups in different directions. Life in the arid desert was conducive to a nomadic tendency, and migrations became a natural adventure.

In early days, one branch of the race known as the Shepherd Kings, the Hyksos, crossed the Nile, and pressing northward became the dominant race in Egypt. Another group crossed the Red Sea, and were known as Arabs, or Ethiopians. Still another migration, even more enterprising, swept northward and, settling on the Mediterranean littoral, became known as Phoenicians.

Impelled, it seems, by an insatiable restlessness, a fourth group turned eastward, and attracted by the high, fertile plain between the Tigris and Euphrates, joined the Babylonians, already settled there, and developed, not only the most important branch of the Semitic race, but a type of civilization far in advance of any other people of their time.

As the centuries passed, racial restlessness again asserted itself, and groups from this eastern development turned north and westward, peopled Syria, founded Damascus, and, as Canaanites, overflowed into what is now Palestine. It is believed that the latter migration occurred at about 1700 B.C.

A name inextricably woven into the early history of the Hebrews is that of the stately patriarch, Abraham. Out of the mysterious East he came to stalk across the Palestinian stage, a grand and forceful character. The date of the coming into Palestine of Abraham and his clan from Ur of the Chaldees, a city in southern Babylonia, is uncertain. It is certain that the patriarch found Canaan, as it was then known, a populous country, with fortified hill-tops, and a people ready to defend themselves against the invader. It is historically certain that if the date assigned above for the peopling of the land by the Canaanites is accurate, the date of Abraham's appearance is much later than 2200 B.C.

The Bible narrative tells of Abraham's wanderings to the southward, and the growth and development of his

clan. In the course of time, to Abraham and Sarah was born Isaac, who, it appears, succeeded Abraham as Patriarch of the tribe. Jacob, Isaac's son, later known as "Israel," was the progenitor of the Jewish people, who accordingly are called the Children of Israel.

Israel was the father of twelve sons, each of whom became the head of a tribe or clan, which collectively constituted the twelve tribes of Israel. While the details of those early events are somewhat indefinite and often confused, it appears that one son, Joseph, sojourned in Egypt, and when famine came to his brethren in the North, they accepted his invitation to abide in Goshen, a portion of Egypt given to Jacob by Pharaoh.

For centuries, the Israelites remained in Egypt, at first as welcome guests. Later under a more militant dynasty, they became slaves, suffered great hardships and privations, being compelled to undergo heavy toil until the Exodus, when Moses, under command of the Lord, led them triumphantly out of their bondage.

Of the years passed in Egypt, little is known apart from the Bible narrative, in which Moses, under divine guidance, plays so prominent a part. Of the Exodus, the passage over the Red Sea, and the wanderings in the wilderness, practically nothing is known apart from the inspiring pages of the Bible. There is no legitimate reason to doubt the accuracy of this narrative, although there has been disagreement among scholars both as to the date of the Exodus, and of the time of the arrival of these wilderness wanderers in the Promised Land.

Sir Charles Marston concludes, after careful examination of evidence turned up by the spade of the archaeologists and from the reading of ancient documents, that the entry of the Children of Israel under Joshua into Palestine was between 1407 B.C. and 1397 B.C.

Of the number of these wanderers, there is no accurate

knowledge, although there has been much speculation about the question. Why they should have wandered forty years in a comparatively small area is satisfactorily explained in the Scriptures.

This long period of wandering may have been necessary in order for a people, so long enslaved, to learn how to make the best use of their unaccustomed liberty. May not this prolonged experience have furnished the rigid discipline necessary to the fulfillment of the great part they were to play in subsequent centuries? The story of the intrepid Moses, who, after his heroic leadership, supported by unshakeable faith in God, was privileged only to behold the Promised Land from "Nebo's lonely height," is one of the most touching in the Pentateuch. But his work was finished.

The wanderers had, through the discipline of hardship and want, come to realize that when full trust was placed in God, their needs were met. They had learned the most important of all lessons, and now were ready to enter upon the greatest of all enterprises, the development of the true concept of Deity, which brought to them the significant title, "The Chosen People."

Over the Biblical narrative of the crossing of the Jordan, there has been much speculation. The belief that God here wrought a miracle to aid His people in their onward course, has many defenders. And their faith is supported by an account of the Arabic historian, Nuwairi, first translated and published in 1895, who states that a landslide from the steep clay banks of the river stopped the flow of water, thus enabling the crossing to be easily made.

And now Sir Charles Marston pertinently says, why could not the divine Power have used the medium of a landslide, caused by an earthquake, to forward His purpose regarding His chosen people? The query is one in

which the believers in divine immanence and intervention will find much ground for thoughtful consideration.

2. JERICHO AND AFTER

NOT ALONE in Jericho, but in other fortified points, did the invaders meet stout resistance. The Canaanites did not readily yield up the land which had long been their home. Gradually, however, partially by conquest over a considerable period, and partially by assimilation, the hardy Israelites gained the ascendancy, and settled down to carry out what, viewed at this distant day, seems a divine plan.

Each of the twelve tribes chose a territory, some to the east of Jordan, toward the Arabian desert; others located between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. But the difficulties were not wholly from the Canaanites. Bordering tribes, witnessing the successful enterprise of the Israelites, and coveting the fertile land they had acquired, undertook to conquer the territory for themselves. At least four of these attempts were made during the period when the rule of Israel was in the hands of the Judges.

The Moabites, from the East, undertook a conquest, but were defeated by the strategy of Ehud. The Midianites also tried their hand at the conquest of Israel, but were stopped by the leadership of Gideon. The attack upon Gilead by the Ammonites was withstood under the direction of Jephthah.

A protracted effort to overthrow the Israelites, made by the Philistines in the South, was met by Samuel, Samson, Eli, and Saul. But the defense was not wholly successful until the intrepid David assumed leadership. Then the Philistines were finally overthrown. An important effect of these struggles was the developing of closer unity between the various tribes. A social consciousness

was born, which greatly changed the subsequent history of Israel.

It is generally agreed that the Golden Age of Israel was during the reigns of David and his son, Solomon. Enemies were overcome, Jerusalem was taken from the Jebusites, and made the capital. The temple was built, and the rites of the Jewish religion and worship became more clearly defined. The priesthood assumed a greater importance, and Israel flourished in the belief that divine Will was revealed, and had become the constant guide to their national activities.

It was during this period that men of literary turn began to gather familiar traditions, laws, and legends into permanent form, and write them in books. This was the definite beginning of the development of the Old Testament.

With the passing of Solomon, came a change in the political outlook of Israel. The tribe of Ephraim, jealous of the success of Solomon's reign, could no longer tolerate a ruler from another tribe. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was made King in Judah, without opposition. But trouble rose in the North. Jeroboam, a young Ephraimite officer, to whom Solomon had entrusted important missions, became active in stirring rebellion against Judah. But alarmed at the discovery of his treachery, he fled to Egypt.

After the accession of Rehoboam to the kingship in Judah, Jeroboam returned from Egypt and took the leadership in an intrigue against the new King. Rehoboam refused to accept certain stipulations of Jeroboam, upon the acceptance of which the latter promised allegiance to the Ruler of Judah. Thereupon a general revolt took place.

All the tribes, except Judah and a portion of Benjamin, refused to acknowledge the descendant of David as their

ruler, and united under the reign of Jeroboam as their King. It appears that the dissension of the northern tribes was largely economic. But undoubtedly another important factor was Solomon's falling away in the early days of his reign from the tribal religious rites and ceremonies which seemed fundamental in their worship.

On the other hand, Jeroboam did not stand for strict and exclusive worship of the one God. Fearful lest the people in worshipping at the Temple in Jerusalem should revolt, he made two calves of gold and set them up as objects of worship, the one in Bethel, the other in Dan. "Behold thy gods, O Israel," cried he, "which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," words which plainly indicate his apostasy.

During the period of the united kingdom, which endured but a single century, Israel attained its greatest glory. When the empire ceased, the divided people, as we have seen, became weakened from frequent quarrelling, and ultimately both fell prey to powerful invaders from the East. The northern division was known as Israel, the southern, as Judah. Each maintained a line of kings, the former, until about 722 B.C., when it was conquered by Assyria; the latter, until Nebuchadnezzar, coming from the East toward the beginning of the sixth century, overcame Jerusalem, and led her people into captivity. Thereafter, Jerusalem was ruled by governors and overlords appointed by the powers at various times to which she was subject. Her independence as a self-governing state ended with the exile.

In the northern kingdom, Jeroboam was succeeded in 912 B.C. by his son, Nadab, who was slain during an uprising in the army. Baasha, head of the revolt that slew the King, seized the throne, slew all the descendants of Jeroboam, and fought a losing war with Damascus. From that time to the final conquest of the northern Kingdom

by Sargon in 722, a succession of rulers sat upon the throne for varying periods, some for scarcely more than a week, so uncertain was the political situation.

Of these rulers after Baasha, sixteen in number, ten stood out most prominently, not so much because of greater skill in statecraft as for their prowess in battle. Omri, who was a successful general in the army of the North against the Philistines, was set upon the throne by his victorious soldiers in place of Zimri, who after a week of rule had committed suicide.

Deep-seated was the conviction among a portion of the people that the sword should be the servant not the master of the people. This conviction led to the nomination of one Tibni, for the kingship. The opposition took up arms and for four years the wasteful contest ran, until Tibni was slain and Omri was safe upon the throne.

Omri, the soldier-king, was a builder. He was a successful warrior against the Moabites, and he transferred the capital from Tirzah to Samaria — a site that in recent years under the spade of the archaeologist has furnished many witnesses of happenings in those ancient days. The site chosen was magnificently adapted both for defense and for a royal capital. It was a hill rising above a plain, far enough from the mountains to preclude a surprise assault. So well had Omri chosen and builded his capital that a century and a half later it took the Assyrians three years to capture it.

Omri was succeeded on the throne by his son Ahab. An incident in the latter's reign closely parallels, in purpose at least, what is going on today between Japan and China. A statement in I Kings 20:34, by Ben-hadad (II), King of Syria, is to the effect that his father, Ben-hadad (I), had taken from Omri certain cities, thereby compelling him to grant rights of trade in the cities of Samaria.

Even in that distant time, the sword was the instrument

for the promotion of trade. In need of an ally, Omri had turned to the King of Tyre, with whom a treaty was made. To strengthen the pact, Jezebel, daughter of the Tyrian king, was given in marriage to Ahab, Omri's son. The pact seemed necessary for already Assyria was rising like a threatening shadow over the East.

Ahab has been called the ablest monarch of Israel in farsightedness, energy, and political wisdom. And considering the times and his theatre of action, he was, for the most part, righteous and just. He made peace with Judah, and through treaties with Ben-hadad increased the trade of his country until the latter, becoming jealous of Ahab's prosperity, made an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow him. Evidence of the prosperity of his reign is found in the remains of an ivory-adorned palace at Samaria built by him on the foundation laid by his father.

3. ENTER BAAL WORSHIP

IT SEEMS that a serious mistake on the part of Judah was made when Ahab, to insure peace with Judah, gave his daughter, Athaliah, to Jehosophat's son, Jehoram. This marriage through Athaliah's mother, Jezebel, introduced the Baal worship to Judah and led to serious consequences. To meet the threat of Assyria, Ahab joined with Ben-hadad of Damascus in a campaign which sent the Assyrian ruler back in a defeat from which a dozen years were required for recovery. Ahab later was slain in a battle waged by the two kingdoms against Ben-hadad.

The introduction of Baal worship through Ahab's Tyrian wife, Jezebel, came about in this way. As her father and Tyre were strongly committed to this heathen worship, when Jezebel came to Samaria as Ahab's bride she was permitted to bring her Baal gods with her, and through intrigue and murder sought to supplant the worship of Jehovah with her own gods.

Busied with the many activities of a king in those troublous times, Ahab permitted her to have her own way. Then came Elijah upon the scene, a roughly clad, uncouth defender of the God of the Hebrews. When he challenged the Baal priests to prove the power of their gods, the traditional test of calling down fire upon Mt. Carmel was resorted to with the well-known results.

This defeat, however, and the slaying of her Baal priests did not stop the scheming Jezebel in her efforts to Baal-ize Israel. Long and arduously she labored, but in vain. It was Elijah, Jehovah's champion, who withstood the efforts to turn the people to false gods. The prophet did even more.

It has been well said that, "As Moses was the first, so Elijah was the second great champion of social justice and democracy." (Bailey & Kent, *The Hebrew Commonwealth*, p. 166). Perhaps it was this unyielding loyalty to Jehovah that caused Jesus, centuries later, to see in John the Baptist another Elijah.

The successor to Elijah was the disciple Elisha, who received the mantle of the old prophet as he ascended in a chariot of fire. The later prophet pursued a different course. Instead of antagonizing royalty, he became its friend. His great desire also was to overthrow Baal worship and the house of Ahab.

How well he succeeded is revealed in the bloody career of Jehu, a career, however, which hastened the downfall of Israel and brought low the southern kingdom. Shalmaneser again appeared on the eastern horizon, and while the victory of Assyria was not immediate, there followed a century of strife which resulted in a final victory by Sargon II over Israel.

The conqueror led his victims away captive to the number of nearly thirty thousand, and the cities of Israel became populated by intruders from the surrounding

country. Thus the Ten Tribes disappeared from history as an integral political and racial entity.

After the fall of Israel, the path of Judah was also downward. The disaster in the northern kingdom led to much thought-taking in the South. What had brought about this great calamity? The answer was "Disobedience to Jehovah." And this was the theme of the prophets who invariably strove to turn the people back to worship of the one God, worship not merely in words and ritual, but in righteous living of the daily life.

The downward course of Judah was not uninterrupted by seasons of revival. But her enemies gained in strength. That low-hanging cloud in the East gathered in intensity until the storm broke, and Jehoiakim surrendered himself and his family into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C. In the deportation which followed, at first only the wealthy and the influential, the skilled workers and army were led into captivity. But as the city was sacked and its treasures removed, the whole aspect of life in Jerusalem was changed. Financially the people were ruined. Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah his ruler there. He was a weak man; his policies were neither wise nor honorable. He made secret pacts with Tyre and Sidon and some of the provinces east of Jordan. But as there was no active revolt, the Assyrian monarch tolerated him for a time. The situation however was fraught with peril.

Presently, a new Egyptian king, Hophra by name, persuaded Zedekiah that united, they had a good chance to win against Assyria. A revolt was undertaken in 589 B.C. To this Nebuchadnezzar responded in January of the following year, by an attack upon Jerusalem. Against Jeremiah's thunderous protests, Zedekiah, deceived by a pseudo-popular support, stood out.

To insure Jehovah's aid, all the Hebrew slaves held

unlawfully were set free. Presently an Egyptian army appeared and the Assyrians were forced to raise the siege.

The people were overjoyed. Was not this proof that Jehovah still guarded His own? But they disproved their sincerity by again enslaving with indecent haste those whom they had set free. Their joy however was short-lived.

The Assyrian King, with a reformed and strengthened army, returned to the siege, and a year and a half later the city was forced to surrender. This time Nebuchadnezzar made secure his triumph. The ruler Zedekiah was taken to Babylon and blinded. Many nobles were put to death, but the city was not entirely cleared of its people. Judah then became a Babylonian colony. Its existence as a political entity was at an end.

Without government by strong rulers, the inhabitants of Jerusalem left behind were set upon by surrounding tribes upon whom the kings of Judah had heaped defeat in the centuries before. To resist their invasions, a stronger government was formed and a defense undertaken. But its glory had departed, never to return.

The Jews were now in three main groups — one in Egypt, another in Babylon, and a remnant in Jerusalem. There is no doubt that the experience in Babylon, on the whole, was a profitable one.

The people of Judah had drifted from the moorings of true worship — and this despite all the warnings, pleadings, and admonitions of a line of spiritually-minded prophets. In captivity, they had time to review the past, and under the spiritual guidance of the great Ezekiel they found their way again.

So that when a kinder-hearted monarch came to the throne of Assyria, in the person of Cyrus, Persian conqueror, the captives who so wished were permitted to

return to Jerusalem again. But they returned chastened and in humility.

Their experience in a rich and prosperous country, governed by a wise ruler and association with persons of culture and broad vision, had transformed their outlook and greatly lifted their horizon. So satisfied and happy were many that a considerable number, especially the scholarly group, chose to remain by the waters of Babylon, even though permitted to return to Jerusalem.

IV

The Story of the Old Testament

As we take from our reading table a neatly bound, legibly printed Bible, its pages conveniently divided into chapters, paragraphs, and verses, perhaps with a synopsis at the head of each chapter and with marginal cross-references for the guidance of the student, we give little thought to the sources of the book, to the long centuries it was in the making, to the untiring labor of scribes and scholars who have given the most consecrated service to the writing, copying of manuscripts, revision and printing, which have enabled us to receive our Bible with its present content, and in so compact and convenient a form.

While it may not be necessary, in order to gain its spiritual message, to know of the history of the book and of the labor that has brought it forth, yet none will deny that knowledge of its background will add to the conviction that its evolution has been under the influence of a Power above the human. Is it not desirable, then, to make some inquiry about the sources and development of the Christian Bible?

The word "Bible" derives from a Greek word *biblia*, "books," plural of *biblion*, which had the primary meaning of the inner bark of papyrus, as that was a substance used for writing in early times before paper was manufactured. "Bible," then, signifies "books," a collection of books, in this case, sixty-six.

A convenient method by which to remember the number of books of both Testaments is this: Three, placed

beside its multiple, nine, makes thirty-nine, the number of books in the Old Testament; and three times nine, its multiple, makes twenty-seven, the number in the New. And the two numbers added, thirty-nine and twenty-seven, make sixty-six, the number of books in the Bible.

Early in our study of the Bible, the question arises: Did the authors of the various books write them out of hand, that is, of their own knowledge, or were there sources from which the facts were drawn? It is an interesting query and can be answered with a degree of assurance. The authors of the Bible, that is, of the Old Testament and in part of the New, drew from many sources for the history, romance, facts, legends, and traditions which they recorded. And a portion of this source material was from written books. As none of these "books before the Bible" have been preserved, the query arises, How do we know that there were such books? What proof have we of their existence? The answer is, from internal evidence, evidence found within the books of the Bible themselves.

Let us look at the record. In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, that is, as to position and content, but not as to date of its authorship, we find two accounts of Creation — so dissimilar as to carry the conviction that they were written by different authors and brought together at a later time, perhaps much later, without apparent effort at reconciliation of the diverse narratives. In the opening chapter of Genesis, and the early verses of the second, the Creator is Elohim. In the second chapter, beyond the fourth verse, the Creator is Jehovah Yawah, or Yahweh in the Hebrew language in which the book was written.

These differences, apparently, came about in this way: There was, in the south of Palestine, that is, in Judah, a man, an historian of skill in gathering from legend and

tradition, from folklore and myth, the thread of the greatest story of all time, the story of Creation.

He was an enthusiast in his subject, with a spiritual vision, who understood in goodly degree the immanence of God in the world of human affairs. He wrote, not as a prophet or as a lawgiver, but rather as an historian, a recorder of events, with little of interpretation. That he wrote from the South is evident from his use of names of that locality. He it was who described the Creator as Jehovah, or Jehovah Elohim, the Lord God. He, alone, of the writers of Genesis, uses the term apparently in ignorance of the statement found in Exodus 6:3, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." Because he, alone, used this term for Deity, his writing is termed the Jehovistic document, usually designated among Biblical scholars by the letter "J."

Some time later — Professor Smyth believes at least half a century — another account was written in the North, in Israel, judging from the place names. It appears that this was the work of more than one author, as it is less vivid in style, has less of the personal touch. Deity is described by the term "Elohim." Much of the narrative runs parallel with the earlier word, but there is enough divergence in the use of names and, in some instances, in historical events, to plainly mark the distinction in authorship.

This is known as the Elohist document, designated as "E." It is commonly agreed that the two were soon combined into a single narrative, known as "J. E." It is also apparent that certain discrepancies as to details strongly indicate at least a dual authorship. Many scholars contend that it was a later "E" document that gives the account of the true, that is, of the spiritual creation.

Even more definite proof that the authors of the Old Testament books were drawing from documentary sources, is found in the reference to books not of the canon, within the text of our Bible itself. Such are the books of Jasher and of the Wars of Jehovah, the first referred to in II Samuel I:18, the latter in Numbers 21:14.

Besides these were other written sources, among them the books of Gad and Jehu, of Shemaiah and Iddo, all referred to by various writers of the books of the Bible. This seems to constitute conclusive proof that there were "bibles before the Bible," books dealing with the history and religious development of the people, containing not alone historical narrative but laws and prophecies as well.

The origin of those books is lost in the dim past. It seems, however, from the evidence presented in recent years through the discoveries of the archaeologists, that the art of writing was known much earlier than was formerly thought, and it is not unlikely that there were written records far antedating the authorship of canonical books of the Old Testament.

About the time of the reign of Hezekiah, that is, about 730 B.C., there was a man gifted in the art of collecting these written and unwritten traditions, with the ability to weigh their importance and to write in an appealing style his findings. This conclusion is justified by the story as recorded in II Kings 22 and 23. While the Temple was being repaired, a book was found—a roll of papyrus manuscript—and passed by the High Priest to Shaphan, the scribe, who took it to King Josiah. Upon examination, it was found to contain "the Law." An assembly of all the people was called, and the King, standing by a pillar of the Temple, read from the Sacred Roll.

The King was so deeply stirred by the contents of the Roll, that we read: "And the king stood by a pillar,

and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant." Some scholars cite this as the outstanding event in the making of the Bible.

The query arises, What was the book? Considered opinion is that it was a part, or all, of the book of Deuteronomy which was found by Hilkiah on that memorable day. That it was of the greatest importance is easily deduced from the expedition with which he called the Assembly to listen to its message from the Lord. Obviously, it was an old manuscript, of which they may have had some tradition, but which had been lost.

Other similar internal evidence may be found to substantiate the assumption that back of the Old Testament was a considerable volume of literature, varying in importance, which became original sources for the writers of the various books. All of the originals have disappeared, but it seems that the conclusion is warranted that we have preserved for us the important parts of those sacred writings of the centuries long past.

Modern scholarship has revealed many important facts regarding the origin and growth of the Old Testament. No longer is the arrangement of the numerous books in the Authorized Version accepted as indicating the order in which they were written, or taken into the Canon. Careful research has established with reasonable certainty the approximate date of the writing of each, although the authorship of many of the books is still unknown.

Furthermore, a more rational view of the origin and significance of the various books reveals the important fact that the Old Testament is, primarily, a history of the

struggle of a people imbued with deep religious convictions, in their search for a divine Power; of an evolution out of the darkness of material worship into the light which radiates from the understanding of the one God. Thus the Old Testament is found to have historical significance far greater than that which has usually been accorded it. It is, in fact, the national literature of the Hebrew race.

It has been generally accepted therefore that the several historical books of the Old Testament began to take form during the period of the united monarchy under David and Solomon (1000–950 B.C.); that prior to that period there existed a vast mass of tradition and folklore, of songs, sagas, and mythology, passed down orally from generation to generation, the origin of which is lost in the dimness of antiquity; that there were also certain books, some fourteen in all, known only by the names under which they appear in the Bible itself.

It is commonly believed that not until the tenth century B.C. were these traditions put into written form, and not until centuries later were they developed into the form in which we now find them. These meager beginnings, however, at whatever date written, were followed by writings which have had a tremendous influence, not only upon the history of the Hebrew race, but upon the whole world as well; this influence is increasingly operative even to the present day.

Archaeologists now claim, and with justification, that various systems of writing existed centuries before the time of Moses. This raises the pertinent question: Is it not probable that the accounts of the Creation and of the Flood, the story of Abraham and other important incidents, were written long before the dates which have been generally ascribed to them?

The stories, traditions, myths, folk tales, songs and

sagas of pre-Davidic times oral or written explained the origin of the world, the creation of the human race and recounted the adventures of primitive man. From these sources, which had survived for untold centuries, came the substance of the accounts appearing in Genesis.

Then followed, in course of time, the Abraham traditions, including the story of the coming of the patriarch and his clan from the East, of their development, captivity in Egypt, release and wanderings in the wilderness, until finally under the leadership of Moses, the Chosen People arrived at the Promised Land into which Joshua took them.

Accompanying these traditions were numerous popular songs which we now find embedded in the literature of the Old Testament. Many of these, no doubt, were sung by this primitive people for centuries before finding their final form in the words now so familiar to all who accept the Bible as their sacred book. There also developed at an early date terse and sententious proverbs and laws which had become generally accepted as rules to be followed by the faithful who would win and profit by Jehovah's favor.

During the reign of David, a collection of lyric poetry was begun, the most conspicuous examples of which are found in the book of Psalms. While tradition attributed to David their authorship, it now seems certain that not all came directly from his hand. The Wisdom Literature which followed, because of the mental qualities which tradition has ascribed to Solomon, is commonly attributed to him, but that he was its author is very doubtful. It is probable, however, that many of his wise sayings are incorporated in this literature; and, moreover, we may well believe that he had part in giving popularity to the form of writings which later appeared as Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

The period of the divided kingdoms, the two centuries from 950 to 750 B.C., so far as we know, saw but little actual literary development, although during this period a school of prophetic writers began to formulate the history of the Hebrew people. The succeeding three centuries (750–450 B.C.) saw the development by literary priests and prophets of complete books of the Old Testament as we know them. Up to this time the writings had been fragmentary and incomplete. Now the prophets gave definite form to their messages. Amos was the first to write a complete book, and from the standpoint of authorship, this is regarded as the oldest book of the Old Testament.

During the three centuries after the return to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon, several books were written in their present form. Certain of these, as Ruth, Esther, Jonah, and probably the last part of Daniel, were symbolic rather than factual. The Psalms were gathered into a book and the Song of Solomon was arranged in its present form. Also perfected were Ecclesiastes, Job, and Proverbs. A single example of the apocalyptic type of literature, which had gained great popularity, is found in the latter part of the book of Daniel. It is now held by scholars that in the period from 1000 B.C. to 150 B.C. appeared in its present form all the literature included in the canon of the Old Testament.

In the light of recent discoveries, it seems certain that the Pentateuch, which appears as the first five books of the Bible, was not put in its present form until the fifth century, that is, until after the captivity. Some authorities place its final writing at even a later date.

Until the captive Hebrews returned from Babylon and probably until the 3rd century B.C., the books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, and all the authors were Jews. All the originals of the early books were

destroyed during the period of exile, but copies in Aramaic were preserved in Egypt and in Babylon. During the last centuries before the Christian era copies were written in both Aramaic and Greek. In the 3rd century B.C. appeared the Septuagint Version (Greek), which is still used by the Eastern Church.

The copying of these old manuscripts was done with meticulous accuracy, and with great labor. Not alone the originals but all the early copies of the old manuscripts were long ago destroyed, how and when no one knows. Now the earliest extant documents of the Old Testament in Hebrew date no farther back than the tenth century of the Christian era. As we shall see, there are many manuscripts of the New Testament of a much earlier date.

V

The Law

THE Pentateuch, as the first five books of the Bible are commonly termed, is also known as "The Law." This title is given to it because it so aptly characterizes its contents. When the Children of Israel escaped from the conditions of bondage in Egypt to which they had been long subjected, they were little more than an unorganized mass, lacking unity of thought and action.

It was at once apparent that some form of common agreement was necessary in order for them to go forward to fulfill their destined place as an organized people. Under the guidance of the intrepid Moses, whom God had chosen for this mighty task, they were led to accept a form of government which may be termed Theocracy. That is to say, under the inspiration of the Hebrew Law-giver, they were led to learn the Will of God, and knowing it, to obey it.

Moses' exalted experience in Horeb gave them, in the Ten Commandments, the fundamental truths upon which their subsequent laws were founded. This greatest of all moral codes came through a definite experience of Theophany, and enabled Moses to turn the unsettled thought of his turbulent and self-willed followers to the acceptance of Jehovah as their guide and protection. This was the beginning of the elaborate system of law which developed so extensively as to direct both the private life of the individual and the affairs of the whole people. As they went forward in their years of wandering, and also after the settlement in the land of Canaan, this law de-

veloped, unfolded, to meet the new conditions they were constantly facing.

To fully understand the situation in which the Children of Israel found themselves, we need to bear in mind that they were an unorganized group, with no experience in self-government, and with little or no racial consciousness. Moses' task was to develop them into a closely-knit organized band, prepared to make their way toward a common purpose; and that purpose he saw to be doing the Will of God. Surely, a task sufficient to challenge the efforts of the most courageous leader.

As to the time of the acceptance of the Law as authoritative, that is, of its canonization, there is some doubt. Two major historic events, however, bear upon the case. One is the promulgation in 621 B.C. of the Deuteronomic Law (2 Kings 22f): the second the publication of a Book of the Law brought by Ezra from Babylon, probably about 450 B.C. (Neh. 8-10). In both cases, says Professor John Skinner, "a Law Book was solemnly accepted by the people as the basis of a covenant with God, and thereafter as having normative authority for religion and the conduct of life" (Peake's Commentary, p. 37).

It is still uncertain whether Ezra's Law Book contained all the five books of the Pentateuch, or only the Priestly Code. While Deuteronomy contains the moral and legal code accepted by the people for their guidance, it also appears that the author of Leviticus revised the earlier laws and added substantially to them. This may have been done during the exile, in which case, the Law Book brought back to Jerusalem may have been the Pentateuch which, after further slight revisions, appeared in its present form.

But the Pentateuch contains much more than that Law. To a great degree, it is historical as well as legal. For here we find the story of creation in dual form and the history

of the beginnings of the human race. These narratives of the book of Genesis continue on through subsequent books. In fact, so easily does the historical narrative continue in Joshua, that this book is sometimes joined with the five of the Pentateuch, making what is known as the "Hexateuch."

The development of the Law following the Exodus is closely bound up with the history of the people. It could scarcely be otherwise, for the two are closely inter-related. The law grew out of the necessities of the people. At the time of compilation, the five books of the Pentateuch were regarded as one book, and the division into their present form seems somewhat artificial, for the subject matter in a given book is not always related.

Originally, Genesis was followed by a story of the life and deeds of Moses, which carried Israel's story to the entrance into Canaan, and made up the narrative portions of Exodus and Numbers, perhaps originally with a version of Moses' passing on and burial. In the revised form, as we now have it, this account appears in Deuteronomy. The narrative, which has been termed the "Saga of Moses," is not always continuous, but is frequently interrupted by the discussion of legalistic and ritualistic subjects.

The authorship of the Pentateuch was long attributed to Moses. But recent discoveries, intensive scholarship, and the historical method of research, have definitely disproved this theory. An author would not have spoken of himself in the manner ascribed to Moses in many instances. Nor would he have intertwined two stories, as "J" and "E" into a single narrative had he been the author of both. Moreover, it is apparent that to strengthen the people's loyalty to the laws promulgated under Moses' leadership, many statements were attributed to him which manifestly were made by others.

This in no wise detracts from the high accomplishments of the great Law-giver, but rather emphasizes the efforts of the priest-writers to utilize his name to the utmost to strengthen the adherence of the people to the Mosaic code. Moses was the outstanding personality, the sacred character of the Exodus. He has been and ever will be the intrepid leader, who came so near to Jehovah as to receive directly the divine commands and the fundamental laws, as exhibited in the Ten Commandments.

One notable fact pointed out by modern scholars is the similarity between the laws of Moses and those promulgated by Hammurabi, King of Babylon, between 2285 and 2242 B.C. This legal code was written one thousand years before the time of Moses. Yet the latter has enough similarity to indicate a certain dependence, the one upon the other. This in no wise detracts from the authority of Moses' code, or the authenticity of the account of Moses' experience on Horeb. Rather does it not bespeak the omni-availability of divine intelligence, which has found expression at widely different times and in divers places, when the minds of men have been prepared to receive God's message?

It was during the exile that the priests and Levites, a class which hitherto had been overshadowed by the prophets, turned their thoughts to the perpetuation of the religious customs, rules, rituals, and traditions of Israel. Their previous functions are set forth in Deuteronomy 33:8-10. They were, in brief, the guardians of the sacred oracles, and teachers of the law; they acted as judges and celebrated the rites at the altar. Thus they gained prominence in the social fabric, and with the decline of the powers of the prophets became the most powerful group in Israel.

The high position attained by the priests accounts for their desire and determination to record the important

laws and rituals. Hence we have the priestly code laws and the history found in the Pentateuch, the recording of which extended from 600 to 450 B.C., but which ended with the great reformation and the acceptance of the Law Book of Ezra. Thus the Levitical priests (descendants of Levi) codified, revised, and extended the original laws of Moses until they assumed the form which is now found in the book of Leviticus, and in the legal sections of Exodus and Numbers. Some scholars contend that it was the desire of these priest-writers to give to their laws a historic background that led to the writing of the story of Creation, including man, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. As both Israel and Judah were represented in this group of priest-writers, this led to the interweaving of the two stories, that of the South with that of the Northern tribe, now known, as we have seen, as the Jehovistic and Elohist accounts of Creation.

VI

Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings

JOSHUA, the man, was an important personage in the wilderness journey, and later in the occupation of Palestine. It is believed that he was born in Goshen, of parents still in slavery. He appears in the Bible account as having been chosen by Moses during the long pilgrimage to lead the battle against Amalek at Rephidim. He also was one of the twelve chosen to explore the land of Canaan, prior to the crossing of Jordan, and was one of two who reported favorably on the condition of the country. From these facts we conclude that Joshua was recognized as a man possessed of the qualities of a commander.

Consequently it was logical that, as we read in Numbers 27:18, Joshua should have been chosen by Moses to succeed him in the leadership of the Children of Israel into the Promised Land; and furthermore, according to Deuteronomy 31:14, 23, he received a definite charge from God to this effect through the words of Moses. With the passing of the great Law-giver, Joshua assumed command, led the people across Jordan, captured Jericho, and proceeded to settle the country. Later, at Beth-horon, the Amorites were signally defeated, and the South was opened to settlement by the Israelites.

So successful a leader was Joshua that his conquests followed one after another, until the power of the Canaanites was quite broken. Then he called an assembly of all Israel and delivered two memorable addresses, which are found in Joshua 23, 24. In both of these exhortations, Joshua called upon the people to be firm in

their worship of the one God, to refrain from marriage with the heathen remnants of the conquered tribes of Canaan, and to beware of strange gods.

In the second of the addresses delivered at Shechem, the old leader again revived the many evidences of God's love for His children, citing the history of the Exodus as proof of His care. Again, in powerful words, he exhorted the people to be faithful to their great Jehovah, Lord God of all. His address completed, it was written in the Law and a stone was set to mark the memorable event.

His task finished, Joshua passed on at the age of one hundred and ten years. He was a potent character, who served his people faithfully and well at a crucial period of their history. As the book of Joshua recounts the activities of this redoubtable leader, it partakes both of the character of history and biography. Its addition to the historical books of the Pentateuch thus becomes a justifiable procedure. It appears that numerous passages were written by Joshua himself. The subject matter is logically divided into three sections, the entrance into Canaan, the conquest of the country, and the farewell addresses.

JUDGES

WITH the passing of Joshua, no leader sprang up immediately who was able to hold the Israelites together and to direct their course as a whole. As emergencies arose, especially between the various tribes and their enemies, local personages assumed authority, and when the victory had been won, it was logical that the successful general should be accepted to exercise the civil authority.

This led to the reign of leaders who were termed Judges. Their duties were not merely judicial, that is, to administer the law. They served as defenders, vindicators, and, as in the case of Samuel, they also acted in the capac-

ity of Prophets. Of the fifteen Judges who administered authority during a period of more than three centuries, eight were successful military heroes, five were civil leaders, while Eli, the high priest, and Samuel performed services quite unlike the others. It sometimes happened that Judges were contemporaneous, each serving his own locality or tribe. Little of splendor was attached to their service, for there were no royal courts with pomp and pageantry as in later times. Driver says of this period, "The Judges formed temporary heads in particular centers, as over particular groups of tribes, Barak in the North, Gideon in the Center, Jephthah on the East of Jordan, Samson in the extreme Southwest."

The earlier chapters of the book of Judges are regarded as a review of events that transpired during Joshua's life. Then follow accounts of happenings under the various Judges, not always in chronological order. Those events are emphasized which contain moral lessons of a kind to spur the people on to greater devotion in their worship of Jehovah.

Several notable events in the history of the Children of Israel find record in the book of Judges. While the period following the passing of Joshua has been aptly termed the "dark age of Jewish history," there were bright spots when victory rested on their banners.

The victory over Sisera was celebrated in Deborah's song of triumph which is said to be the earliest piece of Hebrew literature. Its date, 1154 B.C., seems to be reasonably accurate. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." How assured were these earnest seers that Jehovah's reward was ever to the righteous. The story of Gideon's method in selecting his soldiers for the great victory is a fine example of subtle cleverness. In Judges

also we find the interesting story of that early playboy, the great Samson, who was at once a humorist, a clown, and a Hercules who used his tremendous strength at last to the discomfort of his enemies. Few books of the Bible, if any, contain more of the unusual in adventure told with such appeal of the dramatic art.

The later chapters of Judges record the social and religious life of the period, thus greatly illuminating the records of the strenuous times described in the earlier chapters. There was not continuous warfare, for the periods of peace were longer and more frequent than the times of war.

It seems clear that the substance of the book was rewritten, perhaps many times, before the final record was made. The date of the finished book is uncertain, and some authorities place it after the exile. Under the rule of Samuel, there was peace as well as prosperity. Not so, however, under his sons, who oppressed the people, and as an outcome of their misrule there came the cry for a king.

SAMUEL AND KINGS

SAMUEL combined three types of service: (1) as military leader in a major expedition against the Philistines; (2) as judge, a position gained through his military prowess; (3) as prophet, because of his birth and early experience. He had been dedicated by his mother before his birth to the office of Nazirite, and at twelve he was placed in the Temple to minister "unto the Lord before Eli." Here he first heard the call of the Lord and responded in dutiful obedience. Twenty years later, he appeared as a prophet, warning the people to turn from their idolatrous ways if they would avoid disaster. Soon after this, he assumed leadership in a great victory over the Philistines.

Samuel's native city was Ramah, but he visited the chief cities of the South during his time as judge and ruler. In his later years, he shared his office with his two sons, only to see abuses spring up, which ultimately became so distasteful to the people that there arose a clamor for a king, and Saul was anointed by the Prophet.

The twelve tribes were still intact. They had by this time become accustomed to the country and were in the main prosperous. They were an agricultural people, little given to war — a fact which makes the victory over the Philistines at Mizpeh all the more significant. For it was while a holy feast was in progress there, during which a deeper consecration to God was manifest, that the attack came, and the victory was to the devoted Prophet proof of God's immanence and love for His people.

During the period of the Judges, the people were trained to firmly believe that righteousness would be directly rewarded by God, and that disobedience would be followed by disaster; and further, that God's Will made known through prophet and seer was their law. This represented a type of Theocracy, that is, of government by the Will of God, made known to the spiritually-minded prophets.

Political unity of the tribes was established upon this conviction. And this was so deeply grounded among the people that, in a measure, it removed the need for a king. The prophet-judge took his place.

This accounts for the extraordinary career of Samuel, and the complete confidence of the people in the justice of his rule. In I Samuel 7:2-6, we read of the great reformation wrought by this prophet-priest, resulting in an exalted religious and moral status among the people, which made Samuel's victory, marked by the Eben-ezer stone, of real value to the people. Had they not seen a tremendous victory over their enemies, as proof that God was with them?

The abdication by Samuel of his office as judge, when Saul became king, has been likened to Washington's surrender of the office of Commander-in-Chief of the American armies. The twelfth chapter of I Samuel is called his farewell address, although, as with Washington, it by no means marked the end of his public career.

Samuel continued his career as priest and prophet, doing much to hold the people to their spiritual obligations. To his exhortations, the people responded, bearing witness to his generous, unselfish nature and patriotic life. Unselfish, because he was willing to lay down the robes of office when it became apparent that the people desired a king. Many useful lessons of devotion to the spiritual vision, of unyielding consecration to one's convictions, and of true patriotism, that is, devotion to the welfare of the people, may be learned from this wise and devoted prophet.

The two books of Samuel were at first but one. They were not written by Samuel, but were named for him because of his prominence in the period of transition from Judges to Kings, which covers about a century, that is, from approximately 1150 to 1050 B.C.

KINGS

THE close relationship between Samuel and Kings is seen in the fact that in both the Septuagint and Vulgate Bibles, Kings appears as the third and fourth books of Kings, the books of Samuel being the first and second. The four books furnish a continuous Israelitish history from the reign of Saul and David to the fall of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem, a period of more than four hundred years. Gratifying confirmation of the historical data contained in these books has been found during the last quarter century in the many discoveries of the archaeologists. And lately a new discovery near Lachish contains

names of the kings of Judah and record of events which furnish corroboration of the Bible narrative.

The source of information regarding the history recorded in Kings is probably found in part at least in books named in the text itself. Three of these are The Book of the Acts of Solomon (I Kings 11:41); The Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel; and the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, mentioned fifteen times. Besides these national annals, the author had a Temple chronicle and the written words of the Prophets of Judah and Israel.

The book of Kings covers the most important period of Hebrew history. The story of David's reign, the developments under the wise guidance of Solomon, the impending dangers both from without and within against which the great Prophets so constantly warned the people, the history of four centuries from David to the exile are set down not always chronologically but always with the zest of one who witnessed the events recorded. And while the book is highly historical, its main purpose lies deeper: to bear witness again to the great fact that Jehovah rewards and protects the faithful, and that disaster is the inevitable result of worshipping gods many, and of disobedience to the Will of Him who made heaven and earth. Obedience to the law is followed by temporal well-being. Albeit, in such material times, disobedience to the law will be followed by calamity.

The date of 550 B.C. has been assigned to the books. The fact that the lists of rulers of the kingdoms do not always agree as to the period of the reign, shows that different authors had part in the work of compilation.

The underlying purpose of Kings was to show again the reward of the righteous and the defeat of the ungodly, and to reaffirm the great fact that they, the Chosen People, were under divine guidance.

VII

Prophets of Israel

DURING one of the most important periods of Jewish history, from 750 to 350 B.C., the Prophets of Israel assumed a place of great prominence. The Hebrew people had long been convinced of the existence of One God who watched over them; and gradually the conviction grew that through prophetic vision, the divine Will could be known and divine protection invoked. Consequently, by the religiously inclined, the Prophets were held in high esteem. It appears, however, that all too often their warnings and admonitions were not obeyed, although confidence among the people in the authenticity and authority of their prophecies and proclamations was both firm and general.

The Prophets of Israel, with their knowledge of God and faith in His immanence, supplanted the soothsayers and seers who had gained a popularity entirely out of proportion to their reliability. Their only chance for success had been in the blind faith and credulity of the people. Elisha and Elijah, in a certain sense, exemplified the transition between the early seers and the inspired Prophets who exercised so great an influence over the history of the Hebrew people.

In a large sense, the Prophet was the speaker for God. Through him, the divine Will was revealed; and this revelation, coupled with his knowledge of events and a keen ability to analyze their purport, enabled the Prophet to foresee results with a degree of accuracy that begat confi-

dence among the people in the truthfulness of his utterances.

Dr. Carl Sumner Knopf, in his excellent volume, "The Old Testament Speaks," says of the ancient prophets: "The inspiration of a *nabi* is just what the word implies — an inbreathing of God's eternal truth. This inspiration does not reduce the Prophet to a gibbering clairvoyant or an animated dictaphone. Instead of being dulled, the Prophet is acutely conscious. He sees where others are blind; hears where others are deaf; understands where others are muddled.

"Inspiration heightens every intellectual function, and it is in this state of crystal sanity that the Prophet sees men, events, and tendencies in perspective; glimpses the ultimate outcome of policies; and with an assurance born of this Godlike understanding, thunders forth his 'Thus saith the Lord!'"

AMOS

WHILE the status of the Prophet in Israel was a gradual development, the age of prophecy, as generally accepted, begins at about the middle of the eighth century B.C. Then it was that Amos, a humble shepherd of Judea, coming out of the hill country to the south of Jerusalem, appeared at the shrine in Bethel where an elaborate religious rite was in progress.

It was during a time of peace, when material wealth had rapidly accumulated; and prosperity, expressed in luxurious and profligate living, was apparent on every side. Even religious rites were on a scale of grandeur unknown to this rough-garbed shepherd of Tekoa. But his native shrewdness enabled him to grasp the situation, and to foresee the results of such a condition.

It was a dual problem. The poor were being ground by the rich for gain to be spent upon material pleasures and

vulgar display. The hardy shepherd knew that a continuance of this course would inevitably weaken the fiber of the people, and he warned against impending dangers from Assyria, the black cloud which long hung so menacingly over the Eastern horizon. That he was right, subsequent events proved; for the tempest finally burst upon a hapless Israel, to the destruction of their nationality.

In many respects, the book of Amos furnishes a most interesting parallel to the social conditions of today. While problems of society may seem to shift in character with the centuries, yet, moving in cycles, when viewed over a long period, they vary little in their import. Many of the evils apparent today were inveighed against a hundred generations ago.

The remedy offered by the shepherd of Tekoa to those ancient Israelites is the only sure remedy for the same social evils of today. Justice and righteousness—not human, but divine—he proclaimed as the only means of securing independence, prosperity, and lasting peace. No other remedy was needed. None other is needed today, if these conditions be seen in their proper relation to divine law.

But the traditional objector was there, too! Truth had its opponent. One, Amaziah, shouted “treason,” because Amos dared to criticize the King. Such criticism was especially treasonable, because Amos, who was from the South, dared to criticize a Northern King. Amos denied any standing as a prophet, claiming to be merely a shepherd. But divinely inspired, his fierce denunciations of manifest social evils made him the first prophet, so far as the Bible records go.

That is to say, his is the first extended record of prophecy found in the Old Testament. And he was the beginning of a long line, some of whom with perhaps

greater spiritual insight, and with at least equal courage, strove to correct social evils and save Jewry from impending disaster.

HOSEA

SCARCELY a score of years after the shepherd of Tekoa spoke to the people, came another in the North: Hosea, who foresaw Israel as a mere pawn between two militant and threatening powers, Egypt and Assyria. Like his predecessor, Hosea denounced the corruption of the government and the people, and he sounded a warning of the inevitable result. Drawing a lesson from his unhappy domestic experience, Hosea declared Israel was like a faithless wife; Jehovah, the loving husband. And he foresaw love and forbearance as the solution for all social evils. He recognized and preached a basic connection between right-doing and a clear understanding of facts and tendencies.

ISAIAH

HOSEA was the last of the Northern prophets. While he was still proclaiming his message of love and understanding, in the South there sprang up a prophet destined to become a great force for good in Judah's time of need. This new voice was Isaiah, whose works extended over fifty years. Isaiah was an aristocrat, educated and of brilliant mind, poetic by nature, but with something of the outlook of a statesman. He, too, foresaw the difficulties facing Judah.

The Assyrians were gaining strength and pushing westward; and if King Pekah in the north should join with their forces, Damascus would fall and the way be opened for a complete conquest. Therefore, he importuned Ahaz, warning him of the impending danger, but apparently to little purpose. The oncoming forces from

the East, sweeping northward, took Damascus. After three years' siege, Samaria, capital city of the northern kingdom, also capitulated, and the Ten Tribes of Israel, to the number of nearly thirty thousand, were held captives to Assyria, ultimately to disappear from the stage of history.

The fate of the Ten Tribes may be likened to the disappearance of the River Barada, ancient Pharpar, which takes its rise among the snows of Hermon. After giving its living waters to Damascus, it disappears in the desert waste to the East, swallowed up in an immensity of thirsty sand. Likewise, the Ten Tribes disappeared as an entity, submerged in the sea of humanity which peopled the Tigris-Euphrates region in those early centuries. Much speculation has arisen regarding the disappearance and subsequent history of this host of Israel, but no definite conclusion has been reached.

The Book of Isaiah, viewed under the light of modern scholarship, logically divides itself into three parts: First, Second, and Third Isaiah. First Isaiah presents the prophecies, messages, and admonitions of the spiritually minded prophet, himself, from about B.C. 740 to 700. No doubt additions were made to this original document by the editors and compilers in later centuries.

From internal evidences, it is assumed that the Second Isaiah was written at a later period, probably near the close of the Babylonian captivity, and consequently by another author than the redoubtable prophet. Regarding the Third Isaiah, the case is not quite so clear. Scholars differ as to its authorship. It is believed that the last eleven chapters could not have been written by the same author who wrote the Second Isaiah, that is, chapters forty to fifty-five.

It is held that the author of the second division lived in exile in Babylon with his brethren whom he tried to

comfort. Of their final restoration to their Holy City, he was confident. On the contrary, it is evident that the author of the last eleven chapters lived in Jerusalem, and was prepared to welcome others who would return from the long captivity. The Book of Isaiah in its entirety furnishes the best example of clear-sighted prophecy found in the Bible. It plainly foretells the coming of the Messiah, and describes in detail the mission of the Christ.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are usually termed major prophets, not solely for the superior importance of their messages, but perhaps because of their length. Many of the lesser, the minor prophets, also delivered messages of great importance; but the records in most instances were brief in comparison with the three termed "major"; hence the term "minor."

JEREMIAH

JEREMIAH, son of Hilkiah, is described as of priestly descent. He lived in a small community near Jerusalem. His career, nearly as long as that of his predecessor, the great Isaiah, is believed to have extended from 626 to 586 B.C.

This was a period of trying experiences to the Southern kingdom, as it was beset by many dangers from the East. Whereas Jeremiah's predecessors had delivered their messages orally, he caused his to be written, being the first of his line to adopt this method of disseminating his views. It was during the early years of his ministry that the Book of the Law was found by Hilkiah in the Temple.

Jeremiah dictated his messages to Baruch, his secretary. When the latter read the contents of the Roll to the people, the King heard of it and ordered Baruch to read it to him. But Jehoiakim was angered at the contents and burned it. Under Jeremiah's order, however, Baruch rewrote it, and it was extended beyond the contents of the

first Roll. This Roll, it seems, was the beginning of our present book of Jeremiah.

Like many another prophet, Jeremiah found that his words were not heeded. He was even thrown into prison, and later taken to Egypt, where tradition states he was executed. But his work lived after him, and lives today, disseminated throughout many of the Psalms. The somewhat gloomy cast to his messages tends to suggest a stern and severe mentality. But in estimating his works, it should be remembered that his heart's desire was to save Judah from her pending fate, and his prophecies were inspired by the historic happenings of that turbulent time.

It appears that to the first issue of the "Roll," destroyed by order of King Jehoiakim, were added several chapters, probably one, fourteen to twenty, and twenty-five, when Baruch made a second copy. Several copies were made at a later date by the faithful scribe. And it may have been after the passing of Jeremiah in Egypt that the disarrangement of the chapters occurred.

Of the character of the "gloomy" Prophet, no better statement has been made than by Dr. George Findlay, of Leeds, Eng.: "Jeremiah has neither the sublimity nor sustained oratorical powers of Isaiah, nor the pungency of Amos, nor the fire and verve of Nahum, nor the subtlety of Habakkuk, but in the richness of imagery, in fullness of human interest, in lucidity and naturalness, in his command of the various resources of poetry, eloquence, pathos, and practical appeal, Jeremiah is the greatest of the writing Prophets." Surely no higher compliment could be paid to one whose faith enabled him to stand by his firm conviction.

EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL is the historian of the early days of the Exile. He was taken from Jerusalem, where he had been a

Temple priest, with the first deportation in 597 B.C. His prophetic words did not begin at once, but were continued for twenty-two years, until 570 B.C. From his records we learn that the captives were not imprisoned, but permitted to live in small communities and to pursue their own methods of subsistence. And we conclude that the people, although nominally in captivity, were in comfortable circumstances and in a degree self-governing. Ezekiel's apparent intimate knowledge of the affairs of the priesthood leads to the belief that he was of the aristocracy of Jerusalem.

From Babylon, Ezekiel watched the events that were encircling Jerusalem, and foretold in brilliant messages the doom of the city. While at first proclaiming the captivity as a just retribution for the sins of the people, afterward, stirred to sympathy by their deep distress, he changed his method, striving to hearten and comfort them. To Ezekiel has been accorded the distinction of being the first to recognize and assert the importance of individual liberty and responsibility.

While the people were united and happy at home, a strong national worship was maintained. Under the stress of captivity, the conditions were reversed. There was a falling away from this proof of sincerity. Declared Ezekiel, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

Ezekiel was pastor as well as prophet, and during those long years of exile he strove to encourage his people. This accounts for the apocalyptic style of a portion of his book, a form of promise so appealing that it greatly influenced later Jewish writers to adopt this mode of expression. So impressed was the poet Schiller with the poetic vision of Ezekiel, that he declared he would learn Hebrew if only to be able to read this prophet in his original tongue.

VIII

Some Minor Prophets

ZECHARIAH

E_{ZEKIEL}'s apocalyptic mode of expression was closely followed by Zechariah, who, as Ezra states, played an important part in arousing the returned exiles to rebuild the Temple. From internal evidences the conclusion is reached that not all the chapters of the book bearing his name were of his authorship. The first chapters are undoubtedly his; and while they are marked by a goodly degree of the ethical spirit of the great prophets, they appear to lack something of the great prophets' appeal and impressiveness.

HAGGAI

A CONTEMPORARY of Zechariah was Haggai, to whose brief book is assigned the date of 520 B.C. The name of Haggai signifies "festal," probably because the prophet was born on some feast day. Haggai's message, too, is largely devoted to the rebuilding of the Temple. As sixteen years had elapsed since the return from exile, during which nothing had been accomplished, he so earnestly urged upon Zerubbabel and Joshua, religious leaders of the day, the necessity of re-establishing the Temple and its ritual, that the work was begun at once. So vigorously was it pushed, that in four and one half years the Temple was rededicated.

Haggai, for the most part, belongs to the new school, which no longer saw the necessity of the severe denunci-

ations which characterized the messages of the earlier prophets. To build again a strong religious sentiment and return to prescribed worship constituted the theme of his writings.

MALACHI

OF THE prophet Malachi, little or nothing is known. As the name "Malachi" signifies "my messenger, angel," it has been proposed that the title of the book derives from the translation of the first sentence of the Septuagint translation. This reads, "The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by the hand of his angel." It is usually held that the date of the book is between 516, when the Temple was completed, and 458 B.C.

Upon the priesthood which was organized after the rebuilding of the Temple fell the responsibility for the moral status of the people. The prophet saw as his mission the keeping of the priests up to their task. This he did with vigor and effectiveness, strenuously attacking the deep-seated evils of the day. To the falling away from the definite demands of the ritual were attributed the failure of crops, the pest of locusts, and drought. The need for more faith was plainly stated. Malachi is a true type of the ancient prophet. He believed thoroughly in his thesis, the immanence of Jehovah, and spared himself nothing in his efforts to stir the priests and people to the ardor in worship which had characterized the true Children of Israel.

JOEL

LIKE Malachi, Joel the man is unknown, and the date of his writing is in doubt. One school, because of the political situation which it implies, and also due to an allusion to the Greeks, assigns it to about 500 B.C. Another school places it at a much earlier date, 737 B.C. or thereabouts,

making it contemporary with Amos and Hosea. His message is characterized by clarity and force of expression. One commentator points out that if for nothing else, a debt of gratitude is due Joel for one sentence: "Rend your heart and not your garments."

The immediate occasion for the message was a plague of locusts followed by drought and famine, with serious results. In accord with the customs of their day, these hardships were attributed to a falling away from the true worship. Joel, witnessing the distress of the people, and certain of its cause, exhorted them to a greater degree of fidelity to Jehovah and a fuller faith in His presence and power. It was a ringing call to repentance in order to escape the evil which so grievously encompassed them. The second division of the book seems to imply that the Lord had heard, and that relief would come. Higher blessings for the faithful were assured to all, even to those in bondage. The terror of the Lord should fall only upon the Gentiles.

Joel as prophet did not charge the people with sin, either individual or racial, except impliedly. Rather did he rally the people to the need for repentance, for which blessings would inevitably ensue. He is as convinced of the reward of the righteous as he is of the punishment of the wicked. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (Joel 2:32), is his unqualified promise.

ZEPHANIAH

A COLLECTION of Hebrew prophetic literature termed "the Twelve Prophets" contained, among other writings, the book of Zephaniah. The compilation was probably made during the third century B.C., and contained work of a much earlier date.

Zephaniah's message in form of a prophecy is assigned

to the date of 627 B.C., six years before the reforms were brought about through the discovery by Hilkiah of the Law known as Deuteronomy. This prophet was of royal blood, a young man who so effectually influenced the King and populace that to him has been ascribed the title, "The Savonarola of Ancient Jerusalem." According to the brief statement in the title of the book, Zephaniah was the descendant in the fourth generation of Hezekiah.

Zephaniah foretells the probable destruction of the whole world, but assuredly of Judah and Jerusalem. But he foresees salvation from this disaster through repentance, an escape, however, not to be shared either by the Philistines, the peoples of Moab, of Ammon, of Ethiopia or of Nineveh. For them, being enemies of Judah, there is no escape. The judgment against evil is both stern and irrevocable. But the remnant of Israel who repent will find refuge in Jehovah and no more will they be afraid. Isaiah's influence upon this Prophet is pronounced, and the service he performed for his people is not unlike that of the major Prophet. Probably because of textual errors, some parts of the book as presented in the Authorized Version offer difficulties of interpretation.

MICAH

MICAH was a contemporary of Isaiah, a native of Moresheth, a town of Judah which was located in the Shephelah, the fertile region lying between the sea and the heights of Judea. He was one of four prophets of the eighth century whose writings have been preserved in the Old Testament. Following the custom of other prophets, it appears that on his visits to Jerusalem and other centers he delivered at length prophetic messages which later were written down, probably in a condensed form. His call as a prophet, as it is stated in the third chap-

ter, impressed him with his obligation "to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin."

That Micah was from the common people, is seen in the fact that he directed his denunciations against the aristocracy, who in their greed took what they desired wherever they found it. Of this class, he said, "They covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away" (Micah 2:2). He was deeply stirred by the injustice of the time, and invariably took the side of the poor.

The date assigned to this book is about 736 B.C. Critical scholars are convinced that only a portion of the book was written by Micah. A portion is in the form of a dialogue, an effective style for the earnest message of this "Prophet of the Poor." He, too, foresaw better days for Judah when social evils should fall away, and the sun of righteousness should shine upon the repentant.

NAHUM

OF NAHUM, also, but little is known, except that he was a native of "Elkosh," a place unknown in the geography of Judah, but thought to be between Jerusalem and Gaza. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, and his writings are assigned to a period ranging between 630 and 607 B.C. — that is, before the fall of Nineveh — concerning the destruction of which his prophecy is directed.

There is much of the poetic in Nahum's pronouncements, and his conviction of the inevitable fate of the wicked Assyrian city is set forth with great vehemence. He depicts the scene of destruction with almost the vividness of an eyewitness. Jehovah is against Nineveh, and destroys her because of her wickedness and avarice. And he makes of her pending destruction an example of the results of false worship and sinful practices.

HABAKKUK

LIKE Jeremiah, Habakkuk was a prophet of evil; and, like Jeremiah, he complains of God's forbearance of deliverance to the faithful, oppressed on every side, that is by the unrighteous. While he emphasizes the tenderness of Jehovah toward the faithful, as the Avenger, for His enemies he foretells an overwhelming flood.

Because of his dramatic and forceful style, his skillful use of figures and conversation, Habakkuk is sometimes compared favorably with Isaiah in effectiveness of presentation. And like Nahum, he foretells the destruction of Nineveh.

The personal history of this prophet is a mystery, although he is sometimes ascribed to Levitical forebears. In a dialogue with which the book opens, Habakkuk charges Jehovah with permitting evils and injustice in Judah to go unpunished. In 1:5-11, Jehovah assures the prophet that there will be an instrument of justice in the form of the Chaldeans. The prophet is not reconciled to this plan, and describes twenty-five woes to befall Chaldea — a nation of great promise.

In chapter three, a fine lyric ode in style adapted for use in the Temple worship, Jehovah is represented as appearing again as the protector of His people against their numerous foes. The prophet is sternly confident that Jehovah will execute judgment, a righteousness which will be tempered with mercy.

OBADIAH

OBADIAH, with but a single chapter, is the shortest book of the Old Testament. Of its author one simple fact is known. His name signifies "the servant of Jehovah." There is great uncertainty as to its date, as scholars differ by three centuries as to the time of its writing. Because

of a similarity of the opening passages to Jeremiah, the author is sometimes regarded as a contemporary of that prophet. Obadiah deals with the ancient feud between Jacob and Esau. The latter tribe, the Edomites, favorably located, has become prosperous, more prosperous than the children of Israel. This excites envy and opposition. It is not a spiritual message, but foretells the victory of Israel over its enemies; especially the people of Edom.

JONAH

ABOUT few books of the Prophets, if any, has there been the discussion that has centered about Jonah. Is it to be taken literally? Or is it pure allegory, purely imaginary, written to illustrate certain human traits? To assume the latter, in no wise detracts from its value. It is not prophecy, but a narrative purporting to be built around a series of incidents in the author's life.

The argument for its allegorical character is as follows: No claim is made in the book that Jonah is its author, or that it was written by one of his time, eyewitness or another. Nineveh is no longer; while II Kings, 14:25, locates Jonah as a prophet in the Northern Kingdom, when Jeroboam II was King, that is, in the eighth century. Such is one line of reasoning regarding its authorship and purpose.

One school of commentators holds that the book is merely tradition, written centuries after the time of Jonah, probably about 300 B.C. Others hold firmly to the historicity of the book, and point to the incident with the whale as an example of miracle performed by Jehovah to forward a worthy purpose.

The plot of the book is not difficult. Jonah was ordered to announce Jehovah's decree against wicked Nineveh. But the disobedient prophet fled toward the west and took ship at Tarshish. The sailors, finding by

lot that Jonah was responsible for the severe storm in which they found themselves, threw him overboard; and a calm followed. Saved from death by a great fish, Jonah was again commanded to proceed to Nineveh. He obeyed, but uttered his prophecy of destruction for but a third of the city.

The whole city, however, awakening to the danger, repented, fasted, and put on sackcloth. Even the King thus humbled himself. The city was saved, but to Jonah's disapproval. Had he not prophesied its downfall?

Some scholars advance the idea that the book is a satire to show the weakness of prophecy, or at least of a class of prophets whose first concern looks to the fulfillment of their utterances. But as we penetrate deeper into this truly remarkable book, we find beautiful and important lessons of tolerance, compassion, and of the impossibility of drifting beyond God's love and care. The author, whoever he may have been, had the manifest purpose of conveying a valuable lesson as to the result of attempting to disobey divine orders.

In that most readable volume by Warwick James Price, "The One Book," the author points out that while the average reader of the Bible is probably not deeply stirred by the dates which scholars have assigned to the various prophets, even though they be at variance with our preconceived notions, the belief that in many cases the author was some other than the one for whom the book was named, may occasion doubt as to the authenticity of the Scriptures as a whole.

Reflection, however, will show that authorship is not of first importance. "Is the record true?" is the important question — true in facts and true in conveying the writer's purpose. Modern scholarship — higher criticism — as it unfortunately is often termed, has taken nothing from the authenticity of the Bible narrative. Rather has

it, for the spiritually minded, strengthened faith as it has increased understanding.

In corroboration of this position, Price quotes from Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, a worthy and thoughtful man of great mental capacity:

“There came a time in my life when I doubted the divinity of the Scriptures, and I resolved, as a lawyer and a judge, that I would try the Book as I would try anything in the courtroom, taking the evidence for and against. It was a long, serious, and profound study; and using the same principles of evidence in this religious matter as I always do in secular matters, I have come to the decision that the Bible is a supernatural book, in that it voices the word of every truth, and that it has come from God through the divinely wise meditations and inner promptings of Godly writers, and that the only safety for the human race is to follow its teaching.”

Through the Old Testament, and more notably through the New, runs a golden thread of Truth, oft-times buried in the debris of the human affairs of a people struggling out of the darkness of material bondage toward the light of spiritual understanding. Those who approach the Bible with this viewpoint, will find much less difficult the task of reconciling the unreconcilable, the darkness of materiality, of human wickedness, with the spiritual truth, often darkly set forth, but nevertheless always shedding its holy light upon all ready to bask in its healing joys.

For more than four hundred years, these prophets, with vision far above the level of the dense materiality of their day, strove to arouse the people to their dangers from without and within.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Micah, Malachi, and the others of this sturdy group, each as befitting his own time, pleaded, argued, threatened, against the wiles of the

enemy. Who shall say what part they played in holding Judah to a semblance, at least, of ancient faith in the unfoldment of her long-foreseen destiny.

Yet despite all the pleadings, all the warnings of these holy men, the morale of the people weakened; false gods were too alluring. And, following the destiny of the North, Judah, too, finally capitulated to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, to spend years of lamentation on the banks of the rivers of Babylon. Yet perhaps this experience was necessary, for when, under a more generous ruler, they were allowed to return, it was with something of a chastened and purified thought.

IX

The Writings

THE third of the major groups into which the books of the Old Testament logically fall is "the Writings" (*Hagiographa* in the Greek, which signifies "sacred writings"). While this as a group is perhaps less important than the Law and the Prophets, three of the books are outstanding: Nehemiah, Job and the Psalms.

Historically, and also for literary excellence, these books are unsurpassed in the whole Bible. The great work of Nehemiah, his rallying of Judah to the task of rebuilding the walls in order to re-establish the ancient glory of the city and security against its foes, is an outstanding example of patriotism and practical enterprise based upon firm convictions.

Job's argument in a persistent effort to reconcile God's ways to men has no superior in all ancient literature as an example of a troubled heart seeking to find and to know God. Of the Psalms it may be said that during the long centuries a vast host has found in them solace and comfort to cheer and smooth the path of human experience.

The books of this group appear in the Jewish Bible as follows: (1) the Poetical Books: Psalms, Proverbs, Job; (2) the Five Rolls: The Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther; (3) Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

JOB

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE speaks of the book of Job as "towering up alone, far away above all the poetry of the

world." Not the least of the merits of Job is its universality. Its locale may be anywhere, and its authorship is a mystery. Some scholars would place it after the Exile, others at a period much earlier.

It matters little as to time or place, for its appeal is universal and permanent. It is quite sincerely believed by some scholars that it is an imaginative work built around an individual to illustrate the struggles of a suffering mortal held between faith and doubt, but in which faith triumphs. It is purely a drama of words without action. To Job in the depth of despair, such as is not uncommon to humanity, come his three friends, who present the common belief that Job's sufferings are due to his sins. He denies this, for his life has been exemplary; and in an outburst, he challenges God to reveal the cause of his sufferings.

God's answer is one of the grandest, most sublime revelations of divine glory. And the conclusion is the need for full faith, believing even when proof may not be produced. Job at last is comforted, finding full faith in an omniscient God who blesses all, faith which carries us over all the barriers of life, even though we may not see beyond. It has been said that "the problem of the poem [Job] is to reconcile faith in God with the inequalities of His providence"—inequalities, however, only so far as human belief is concerned.

PSALMS

UNLIKE most books of the Old Testament, Psalms is not the product of a given period, but of centuries. Commonly, its authorship is ascribed to David. But it is now rather well established that the "Sweet Singer of Israel," in many cases, was someone other than the great King. Often it seems that the dedication of a Psalm to David has been mistaken for evidence of its authorship.

Scholars are quite generally agreed that many of the Psalms, in fact most of them, bear a date in written form after the return from Exile, centuries after David's reign. Many of the Psalms had long existed orally, and doubtless had been sung and chanted by those who were comforted by their inspiring messages. The final compilation of Psalms, as we now have it, may be placed at about 100 B.C.

In his "Modern Approach to the Old Testament," Dr. Jewett C. Townsend points out that the Psalms fall into five natural divisions: 1 to 41; 42 to 72; 73 to 89; 90 to 106; 107 to 150. The Jews have recognized these divisions since the second century of the Christian era. And he states that the Psalms in each division bear evidence internally that they have come down as a group from a distant source. For example, in the first group "Jehovah" occurs two hundred seventy-two times, and "Elohim," fifteen times; in the second group, "Jehovah" is found but thirty times, and "Elohim," one hundred sixty-four — manifestly indicating a relation to the "J" and "E" sources of the Pentateuch.

That many of the Psalms were composed for use in the Temple, appears from their dedication, "For the Chief Musician." The word "Selah," which occurs at the end of many stanzas is believed by some scholars to be merely a musical or liturgical notation. Dr. Townsend closes his dissertation on the Psalms by a quotation from Harold B. Hunting, a well-known Biblical scholar, an excellent expression of the quality and value of the Psalms: "These great poems have been on the lips of more men and women throughout the centuries than any other words ever written, except the sayings of Jesus. 'They have furnished the bridal hymns, the battle songs, the pilgrim marches, the penitential prayers and the public praises of every nation in Christendom since Christendom was born.' The Book of Psalms has been

called 'the mirror of the soul' because there is no noble emotion, no depth of longing, which does not find expression in it. Hence it is, as St. Augustine said, that 'the Psalms are read in all the world, and there is nothing hid from the heart thereof.' "

PROVERBS

THE proverb has been defined as "a brief saying which arrests attention by its truth, and remains in the memory because of the felicity of its language" (Booth's *Background of Bible*, p. 108). While it has been commonly believed that because of his much-exploited wisdom, the Book of Proverbs came from the hand of Solomon, it is now believed that it is the product of many authors, and that their authorship extends over several centuries. It is apparent that the compiler gathered the fruits of many harvests; and because some of the most important were ascribed to Solomon, his name was given to the collection.

The Proverbs sprang from a native, philosophical observation of human affairs, coupled with divine insight; and, as such, they certainly contain gems of priceless value. There is in them little of the inspiration manifested by the great Prophets, but there is a type of wisdom that could emanate only from a keen observer of life as lived under a variety of circumstances, and who was conscious of God's power and presence.

"Nowhere," declares Joubert, "is there another such manual of conduct, nowhere wiser common sense made memorable in a fusing of ethics and rhetoric." Authorship of many of the Proverbs runs back even beyond tradition. The book, as it stands today, may be assigned to a date anywhere between 350 and 150 B.C. Its style is varied, with aphoristic couplets and antithetic parallelisms as its best literary forms.

THE SONG OF SONGS

THE first verse of this most "troublesome of books" which reads "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's," is misleading as to its authorship. It seems little likely that he would have written in this style of himself. Out of the confusion of opinions regarding the purpose of the book, comes the commonplace conclusion that it is merely a poem of love in the human sense, "an Oriental love lyric."

Two opinions held regarding the book are these: the one, that it consists of a love song between two lovers, perhaps between Solomon and an Egyptian Princess; the other, that it depicts the relation between Solomon, a peasant girl, and her shepherd lover, in which the King attempted, without success, to supplant the latter in the maiden's affections.

The orthodox Jew, however, accepted neither of these versions. He insisted rather that the book was an allegorical representation of God's love for His people — Solomon, representing God; and His "beloved," the Jewish people. It seems that this was the view accepted by the Christians, who saw in it the relationship between Christ and the Church. The date usually assigned to it is around 300 B.C.

Another view of the book is that it is a collection of poems, several of which were written for use at the wedding festival, then as now in the Orient, a prolonged period of joyous celebration. Chapter 4: 1-5, is seen as the response of the groom to his bride, following her recital in 2: 3-6. Viewed in this light, the book has a significance apart from an allegorical interpretation.

RUTH

THE Book of Ruth has likewise been a subject of much speculation and diversity of opinion as to its period. It grew out of a tradition, perhaps historical, predating David by a century or more. It is now generally agreed that it dates from 450 B.C. It is a dramatic love story, the scene laid at first in Moab, the home of Ruth, and later in Judea, where Ruth, as a widow, went to live and in poverty gleaned in the wheat fields of Boaz, a kinsman. A mutual affection sprang up, and later Ruth became his wife. To them was born a son, the grandfather of King David. It is probable that this book was included in the Old Testament canon because of the relation of its chief characters to David, and therefore, it is held, to Christ Jesus.

On the journey from Moab, back to Judea, her mother-in-law, Naomi, entreated Ruth and her sister to return to their own country, where among their own people they would be more likely to contract a second marriage, while she returned to her native Judea. Ruth's refusal to leave her mother-in-law constitutes a beautiful passage often quoted because of its expression of loving loyalty and faith (Ruth 1:16-17).

LAMENTATIONS

THE depth of grief expressed in the five poems known as Lamentations definitely fixes its place in Jewish history. Sometimes these poems, which give expression to the profound sorrow of the Jews over the fall of Jerusalem and their subsequent captivity in Babylon, have been attributed to Jeremiah and appended to the book bearing his name.

Manifestly this was partly because of their character, and partly because of a statement prefixed to Lamentations in the Septuagint version:

“And it came to pass after Israel was led into captivity and Jerusalem was laid waste, that Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said. . . .”

It is probable that no other book contains such an unrestrained expression of grief. The visitor to the “wailing wall” in Jerusalem has seen an example of this inconsolable grief which even today stirs to their very depths the emotions of the faithful.

ECCLESIASTES

THE attribution of Ecclesiastes to the authorship of Solomon was probably arrived at by the compilers of the book because of the King’s reputation for a wisdom that seemed superhuman. This may have resulted from a mistranslation or misapplication of the word “*kohelath*,” which some scholars assert really signifies not “preacher,” as Jerome translated it, but “a collection of sayings and opinions.” That it was not written by the King soon becomes apparent to its reader.

Because of internal evidence as to its style of language, it is usually assigned to the second century B.C. The writer or compiler is unknown. Manifestly it is of Jewish origin, and it is apparent that the writer was in the depths of a gloom that quite encompassed him, a darkness into which streamed no ray of light.

The chief burden of the theme is that all is vanity, all human experience is in vain. Had he not done much to find happiness? He had sought after wisdom and found but a “strong wind.” He had planted vineyards, built houses, sought mirth and pleasure, but to no lasting good, even though he became greater than all before him. The real lesson in the book is the variableness and temporality of materiality in general, and the assurance that things of the Spirit only are substantial and worthy. The “sonnet

on old age" (Chapter 12) is one of the most sympathetic and keenest portrayals of advanced years ever written.

ESTHER

ESTHER is another book which, like Ruth, makes a human rather than a religious appeal. These books are valuable, however, for the light which they shed upon ancient customs and traditions. The high regard in which "Esther" was held is evidenced by the Jewish proverb, "The prophets may fail, but not the Roll"; and of the five Rolls, "Esther" was the most popular reading at the festivals. This book is unique in that God is not named throughout its entire length.

It is a dramatic setting forth of court intrigue, with the ultimate failure of the chief plotter. It probably found its way into the Hebrew canon because it relates how Esther served her race in saving them from the intrigues of a Persian monarch, and also because it describes the origin of an important Jewish feast.

Another view is that the book is purely historic romance, with no factual foundation, but written to glorify the Hebrew race, and perhaps to hearten the Jews oppressed from many untoward circumstances. It is usually assigned to the early part of the second century.

DANIEL

NO LONGER is the book of Daniel assigned a position among the great Prophets, but rather it is placed among the books dealing with anecdotes, biographies, traditions and legends of the Jewish people. Its purpose seems to have been to hold the Jews faithful to their worship of Jehovah in the assurance that He did and would care for them so long as they were obedient to the Law.

The early chapters are historical in character, setting forth the adventures of Daniel and his companions while

held in captivity in Babylon. As an interpreter of the king's dream, Daniel won favor with Nebuchadnezzar to such an extent that the king acknowledged Daniel's God. As a reward, he was given an official position in the king's household.

The incident of the fiery furnace greatly strengthened the king's regard for the one God; and Darius was deeply impressed by Daniel's experience with the lions. The second portion of the book, chapters 7-12, depicts a series of visions dealing with the future of the countries of the Eastern world. It is apocalyptic in character, and is the most outstanding literature of this order to appear in the Old Testament Canon.

It seems highly probable that Daniel was a historic character, about whom were collected many legends and traditions. In face of the facts that Belshazzar at that time was probably not the king, that no "Darius the Mede" received the kingdom, that there was no deportation in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign and that Xerxes preceded Artaxerxes it seems that the author was writing, not history as such, but what amounts in our day to a historical novel, built about a person whose character it was desired to exalt and perpetuate.

Outstanding among the many lessons which the book contains is the fact that complete reliance upon God—that is to say, reliance based upon understanding—will protect one amid the most terrifying of circumstances. Daniel in the den of the lions never lost faith. No more did the Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace. While the date assigned to the production of this book is not earlier than 300 B.C., yet it is held by some scholars that it appeared at about 166 B.C. It is also agreed that the exiled Jews heard of a historical personage, one Daniel, who was regarded as a heroic character. The first six chapters speak of Daniel in the third person. Chapters

from seven to twelve indicate that he is the speaker. This would imply that the book is autobiographical in character, a conclusion which was for a time accepted. This opinion, however, has now been discarded for reasons which scholars accept as conclusive.

We love to believe that the story of Daniel's unshaken faith in God, of his rugged adherence to Him, of his powers of divination is historical in time and wholly reliable. It is also important to know that the type of courage and faith attached to Daniel does exist, that these qualities do belong to universal man, and are realities to be cherished as ideals worthy of emulation. Stories of God's protection under grave dangers, of His reward of the faithful, do but repeat and summarize a mass of human experiences which find a parallel in the greatest witness of all, Christ Jesus.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

SCHOLARS have become accustomed to associate Ezra and Nehemiah, because, formerly, the books appeared as Ezra I and II. This seems defensible on account of their having been contemporaries in the restoring of Zion; the former in the revival through priestly codes of a lagging loyalty to the worship of Jehovah; the latter for his capable leadership in rebuilding the walls and restoring the city in general. Archaeology has uncovered proofs of the lasting quality of the restoration carried on under the leadership of this practical builder. While in Babylon, Ezra had revised and extended the laws of Moses; and when, under the permission of the Persian king, the Jews were permitted to return home, he promulgated these laws and established the priestly party to revise, continue, and extend the early codes of the Jews.

Dr. Knopf, in the "Old Testament Speaks," says that Nehemiah, even though the book was edited by the

chronicler, contains elements of genuine biographical material. He compares the enterprising builder, as a great diarist, with Julius Caesar and Benvenuto Cellini; and he affirms that the book should be read from a "business man's point of view." Nehemiah is a competent man, an organizer, administrator, and general man of affairs; and this commentator reproduces a diary of events related to the building of the wall. The speed with which the work was accomplished may be accounted for by the builder's own statement, "For the people had a mind to work."

CHRONICLES

IN THE style of the late Hebrew, Chronicles I and II, as well as Ezra and Nehemiah, were written. The title in Hebrew signifies "events of the days." It appears from the continuous thread of history running through the four that they might have been the work of the same writer. The story begins with the "beginning," that is, with Adam, and continues to Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem in 432.

From internal evidence, it appears that these books were compiled long after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. The division of Chronicles is merely for convenience — as a two-volume history. It is apparent that the author was deeply religious, for things associated with worship are stressed while wars and general affairs are made less important. He draws largely from previous books, older sources, as the "Book of Jashar," "Histories of Nathan, the Prophet," and a dozen others. The author is strong for David, his history and lineage. The bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem is set forth, and it is emphasized that so sacred is it that none but a Levite could touch it, whatever the circumstances. David lays plans for the Temple, but Solomon is the builder.

Second Chronicles opens with the story of the building of the Temple, and is followed by a eulogy of Solomon and an account of the visit of the Queen of Sheba. There follow chapters of history, always permeated by a religious spirit, more important to the writer than the events themselves. It was written at a time when David was exalted as having been possessed of surpassing power and wisdom.

LATER HISTORY

WHEN the permission to return to their native land was given the captive Jews in 537 B.C., at first a mere remnant of the exiles responded. But in Jerusalem they found a sorry sight, a city devastated and in ruins. With fine courage, however, they set to work; and, presently, their worship of Jehovah, purified and exalted through their experiences in Babylon, was established anew. As a result of this revival, in 516 B.C., under the inspiring leadership of Zechariah, and the supervision of Zerubabel, the rebuilding of the Temple was completed.

Tradition states that in 519 when Darius had succeeded Cyrus as King of Persia a prolonged drought was experienced followed by a severe famine. Haggai the prophet persuaded the people that the reason for these conditions lay in their failure to rebuild the Temple. Jehovah is reported to have withheld the rain because of His displeasure with the inactivity of the people in restoring their center of worship, the Temple of the Most High. So desirous were the exiles remaining in Babylon to restore the ancient glory of their sacred city that they sent subscriptions to aid in the rebuilding.

While the Jews were in exile, a new institution also had been developed. This was the synagogue, a term which meant both the institution for instruction in religion and worship, and the place of meeting wherein the

people gathered to listen to the reading of the Law. In charge of the gatherings were the "elders," comprising only those who had been faithful to the Judaic worship.

At the return from exile, the institution was continued and grew so rapidly that presently each community had its own synagogue; and so thoroughly was it established that both the polity of the synagogue and the institution have persisted with the Jews to the present day.

So generous was Cyrus, King of Persia and ruler through conquest of Assyria and most of the surrounding country, that he not only gave permission to the Israelites to return to the sacred city, but he gave them money and assisted them in other ways.

Soon after the return of the exiles, Zerubbabel, a grandson of Jekoniah, who had directed the rebuilding of the Temple, was appointed governor of Jerusalem. Uprisings against Darius, then King of Persia and overlord of Judah, were undertaken by several rebellious people, and Zerubbabel joined in this movement. It appears that Zechariah regarded the governor as the Messiah, and expected that he would be crowned to reign jointly with the high priest, Joshua. Darius meantime put down rebellion in various regions, and the Jewish hope for independence was thwarted. Zerubbabel, who had disappeared, was succeeded by a foreign governor, unsympathetic toward Jewish aspirations. So Jerusalem came to be ruled by a Persian satrap.

A period of depression followed for four score years, after which Nehemiah, in 444, appeared in Jerusalem with a commission from the King of Persia to rebuild the walls of the city. In this work of rebuilding under the direction of Nehemiah, the Samaritans in the North and the scattered Jews offered to lend a hand. But the offer was refused, perhaps because of fear of again losing their city. Thus began a division between Samaritan and Jew

so intense in its bitterness that it has lasted even to the present day. The city soon had both walls and a Temple.

When the walls had been completed, Nehemiah returned for a time to Persia, but came back again to Jerusalem in 432 as governor. He did much to re-establish the purity of the Jewish race by forbidding all foreign marriages. He also, it appears, with the aid of Ezra, introduced the Pentateuch, so written that it embodied the Levitical law; and he held the people to the necessity of observing it. Under Nehemiah's leadership, the Jews were closely united in civil and religious affairs. The Jewish state and the Jewish church were one, and the High Priest was the head of the community.

Under the strict discipline of Ezra the prophet, the priestly codes, which were first developed in Babylon, were extended to a degree that became burdensome; and it was even finally determined that only descendants of those who had been in exile should be entitled to the privilege of national rights. Even the Levites of the old priestly class were reduced to the position of servants of the Temple. But it has been said, and no doubt truly, that it was due to the strict discipline and rule of the synagogue of that day that the integrity of the Jewish race has been preserved to the present time. Of the later Persian period, but little is known. In fact, history contains little more than a list of the names of the High Priests.

That the contact with Persian religion and worship modified the Jewish religion in important particulars, there can be no doubt. Especially is this true in the concept of "angels" and "spirits." But more important was the idea of Satan. If not wholly a Zoroastrianism, the idea of personified evil gained many additional phases therefrom. It seems probable also that the first conception of the doctrine of the resurrection came

from Persia, since there is little trace of this idea in Judaism prior to the exile.

In the fourth century B.C., came the mighty Alexander, whose meteoric career as a conqueror has no parallel in history. His conquest of Southwestern Asia brought him to Palestine. The effect of his conquest was to spread the Greek culture and language over a wide territory.

So popular did this Hellenic culture become, that Hebrew as a language began to wane. Then it was that a translation into Greek of the Pentateuch was made in Alexandria, in Egypt, a city founded by and named for the great Macedonian. The translation is traditionally said to have been done by some seventy scholars; hence its name, the Septuagint.

It is commonly, but mistakenly, believed that from the time of the prophet Malachi to the beginning of the Christian era there occurred but little of importance that influenced the development of the Christianity that was to come. Several books of the Apocrypha were written during this period, in which are recorded many historical events of much moment in preparing the Jews for the great events ahead. It seems that a divine Power was at work to set the stage for the world's greatest drama, carried out with a dispatch and finality that have been the wonder of the ages since he came who was to revolutionize the concept of Deity, of man's relation to God, and of true worship.

X

The Septuagint

WHEREVER the armies of Alexander the Great made their victorious way, something of Greek culture, as well as the Greek language, naturally followed. This was especially true of the Mediterranean littoral. On the north shore of Egypt, there sprang up the city of Alexandria, named for the great conqueror. Because of its genial climate, favorable location, and general accessibility, it easily became a center for Greek culture and learning. Hither came many Jewish scholars, especially those who had adopted Greek as their language.

During the years following Alexander's conquest, while Ptolemy Philadelphus was king of Egypt, an effort was made to translate the Jewish Law into Greek. As the story runs, to insure the success of the enterprise, the king liberated many Jews who had been held as slaves. And the narrative also states that seventy scholars — some say seventy-two — undertook the task, and in an incredibly short time produced what is known as the Septuagint Bible; that is, the Old Testament, together with the books of the Apocrypha in Greek. This was done during the first half of the third century B.C.

There is much uncertainty as to the facts regarding this very important event. Some scholars accept as authentic a letter from one Artisteas, which states that Demetrius, librarian to Ptolemy Philadelphus, persuaded the king of the desirability of having the translation made: and the same letter purports to give in some detail

the circumstances surrounding the enterprise, even to the freeing of the Jewish slaves.

The story goes that Eleazer, High Priest at Jerusalem, in response to Ptolemy's request, sent seventy-two scholars (elders) to Alexandria to make the translation. They were received with great cordiality, taken to the Island of Pharos, and placed two each in cells, where, the tradition says, the seventy-two produced identical translations in the period of seventy-two days. Careful examination of the ascertained facts concerning the Septuagint leads to a disagreement with these statements.

It is practically certain that only the Law, that is, the Pentateuch, was translated at first; and that the remainder of the Old Testament was translated at various intervals, the exact dates of which are unknown. It derived its name from the tradition that seventy scholars did the work, and, accordingly, it is often designated as the LXX.

The Septuagint Bible is of first importance not only to scholars, but to all believers in Christianity. This was the Bible of Jesus and the early Christians. The famous old manuscripts of the Bible are practically all based upon this version. It was the first translation ever made of the Hebrew Bible; and while no original manuscripts of it are extant, many copies of the originals are held in the important libraries of the world. The text is not always an exact translation of the Hebrew, as the effort was made to clarify the meaning of many passages; but there is little doubt as to the general accuracy of the renditions in this particular.

The Palestinian Jews, not altogether happy over this enterprise, did not accept the Greek version of their Sacred Book, but held to the original. Christianity, however, was largely founded upon the Septuagint, and, in fact, our Old Testament today is based in a considerable measure upon the early manuscripts of this version in

the Greek language. The arrangement of the books of the Septuagint did not follow the order of the Hebrew Bible, and the books of the Apocrypha were interspersed at various points. Until the early part of the sixteenth century, the LXX existed only in manuscript form. Under the supervision of Cardinal Ximenes, it was first embodied in a Polyglot Bible in 1517. This was followed by the "Alden's edition," based upon manuscripts held in Venice. But the most important edition of the Septuagint was published under the direction of Pope Pius in 1587. This was in Latin. Various editions followed in English, which will be discussed in order.

The opposition of the Jews to the Septuagint version was based largely upon the charge of inaccuracy of the translation. This led the non-Palestinian Jews, who knew the Greek language, to desire other translations to be made, correcting any inaccuracies in the original LXX. In consequence, there followed in the second century A.D. three Greek versions, the first of these by Aquila, a convert to Judaism, who lived at Pontus, in Asia Minor. His translation held meticulously to the Hebrew original, giving no elasticity to this rendition. The result was a pedantic verbal rendition of the Hebrew.

This, manifestly, could not be a satisfactory version, and consequently there soon appeared two more translations, one by Theodotion and the other by Symmachus. The former, believed to have been a scholar of Pontus or Ephesus, pursued quite his own course. His version has been called a revision of the Hebrew, rather than a translation. He gave a free rendition to the Hebrew, and brought it out in idiomatic Greek. He also included several books of the Apocrypha, something that Aquila had not done. Aquila's version had gained much prominence among the Christians; but the version of Theodotion, because of its superior expression of the original Hebrew,

quite largely supplanted the earlier renditions. In fact, his translation of the book of Daniel was regarded as so far superior to the original that it supplanted that of the Septuagint.

A few decades later, another translation appeared, the work of Symmachus. His version was faithful to the Hebrew and was expressed in pure Greek, of superior literary form. Under his gentle and skilled hand, the Septuagint for the first time became an example of good literature. It is said that Jerome was aided by this superior scholar in making the Vulgate version of the Bible. Jerome said of these three versions of the LXX: "Aquila translates word for word, Symmachus follows the sense, the Theodotion differs slightly from the Septuagint."

The palm for superior scholarship among the Alexandrian Christians has generally been awarded to Origen, whose works were confined to the first half of the third century. Not only did Origen, dissatisfied with the renditions of the Hebrew Bible, translate it himself, but he brought out what is known as the Hexapla, or six-fold edition of the Old Testament, in which in parallel columns are set forth the various versions, including his own. And he added, in case of the Psalms, three versions in Greek.

No original manuscripts of Origen's work remain, but it seems clear that he undertook this prodigious task for the purpose of arriving at a version which should accurately represent the Hebrew text, while at the same time having due respect for the idioms and niceties of the Greek language. He was aided in this work, which it is said took twenty-eight years.

Some accurate notion of the magnitude of the task undertaken by Origen is gained from examination of manuscripts recently discovered. One of the Psalter is in the Ambrosian library in Milan, another is in a collection

of palimpsests discovered in Cairo, and now in possession of the library at Cambridge, England. From these fragments has been learned the purpose and plan pursued by Origen in bringing out the Hexapla.

But the work of revisions and improvement of the Septuagint did not end with Origen. In the third century, three more scholars applied themselves to the clarification and improvement of the LXX, and, without doubt, each made a contribution helpful to the Bible student. The work of Eusebius of Caesarea was of such a character as to attract the attention of Constantine, who ordered fifty copies of the entire Bible in Greek for use among the churches. In this day of rapid presses, fifty copies of a work would mean but a trifle. In the third century of the Christian Era, when all copying was done laboriously by hand, the making of fifty copies of the Septuagint was a task of no mean proportions.

From this brief account of the happenings connected with the first translations of the Old Testament, it must be apparent that these really tremendous tasks were inspired and undertaken because of a deep-seated conviction as to the value of the Bible as pointing the way of life, and of the devotion which a genuine convert has bestowed upon the work of clarifying the Scriptures for the benefit of his fellow men.

XI

The Samaritan Bible

WHILE consideration of the Samaritan Bible may not directly enter into a discussion of the origin and development of our present-day Bible, there is an association that brings it within the scope of these articles. With the visitor to the celebration of the Passover as carried out each year during Holy Week on Mt. Gerizim, as well as with the student of Biblical history, there inevitably arises a desire to know something of the origin of these strange people, and especially as to the background for the assertion that their method of celebrating the Passover is the only genuine representation of this rite, as described in the Pentateuch. To clarify the situation, let us look briefly at the racial history of the Samaritans.

When Sargon II, King of Assyria, after conquering Samaria, led away nearly 30,000 Israelites into captivity, he adopted the plan of populating the abandoned cities with subjects brought from distant regions. Accordingly, he caused settlers to be sent into the vacant cities of Samaria. They came, according to the Bible record, from "Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim" (II Kings, 17:24), and settled in the cities of Samaria, bringing their traditions, customs, and religious rites, which included the worship of strange gods.

The record indicates that people of some ten different races then came into Samaria and settled, beside the remnant of Jews not deported. These strangers occupied the

land, populated the cities, and intermixed not only among themselves, but with the Jews already there. Out of this admixture there sprang up in the following centuries a race of Samaritans, a new nationality as it were, from the amalgamation of races. Intermarriage also brought about a mixture of religion and worship, so that the remnant of Jews in course of time lost not only their identity as Jews, but also the purity of their religion. They adopted other gods and drifted far from the worship of the one God established by their forbears.

However, something of the tenacity of the old worship remained. When word came that the captives had returned to Jerusalem from exile, and, under the inspiration of Ezra and the masterful leadership of Nehemiah were preparing to rebuild the city, a desire to have a hand in the work and to become recognized as an integral part of the "Chosen People," stirred among those Samaritans who had been less given to the worship of strange gods. Accordingly, representatives of this element were sent to offer their services in rebuilding the Temple and the walls of the city.

Now Nehemiah and Ezra were deeply stirred by reports, which came to them on their return from the exile, to the effect that many Jews in outlying districts had fallen so far away from the worship established by their fathers that they had even intermarried with heathen folks and were worshiping after the manner of the heathen. Convinced of the iniquity of such procedure, it was fully resolved by these robust leaders that not only should they not accept aid from such apostates, but their people, true followers of Jehovah, should have no association with the backsliders.

A specific incident seemed to crystallize this determination. During the investigation carried on by Nehemiah, he found that Manasseh, son-in-law of the then



Courtesy Underwood and Underwood

THE SAMARITAN HIGH PRIEST WITH THE ANCIENT PENTATEUCH ROLL
AT SHECHEM

High Priest, had married the daughter of Sanballat, one of the Samaritan emissaries who had tried to intrigue Nehemiah into leaving his work and entering into conferences with them.

It appears that Manasseh, of himself, preferred to sacrifice his wife rather than lose his standing as a teacher of the prescribed ritual. But his father-in-law offered to build him a temple on Mt. Gerizim, where he could conduct the worship for the Samaritans according to their own ritual and under Persian sanction. When Nehemiah drove him out, Manasseh with his wife proceeded to Samaria, and from that time the breach was widened between Jerusalem and Mt. Gerizim. The bitterness continues until today, a bitterness which in recent years has led to strife and severe casualties during observation of the Passover.

Under the leadership of Manasseh, the Samaritans purified their religion, and returned to the form of worship laid down in the Pentateuch. Moreover, as the Pentateuch was the only portion of the Bible which had been generally accepted when this reformation took place, the Samaritans even to this day have resolutely refused to accept the later adoptions, the Prophets, the Writings, and the New Testament. Resolutely have they held to the old ritual.

In support of their position, they exhibit a manuscript of the Pentateuch which they claim to be the oldest copy of the Bible extant. It is not another version, but is rather a copy of the original in the Old Hebrew characters in use prior to the adoption of the square letters later commonly in use. Since it is a copy, presumably reasonably exact, of the manuscript in use in the time of Manasseh, it has been found useful by scholars in checking later manuscripts as to textual forms.

This copy of the Law, which is most sacred to the

Samaritans, is kept in the Synagogue at Nablus, ancient Shechem, situated just at the foot of Mt. Gerizim. It bears this inscription: "I, Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the Priest, wrote this copy in the court of the tabernacle on Mt. Gerizim, in the thirteenth year of the settlement of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan." Scholars quite generally fail to accept this inscription as genuine.

Many published copies of the Samaritan Law have been examined and a careful estimate of its value has been arrived at. It appears that there are more than five thousand items unlike the Hebrew original, mostly textual differences, that, however, make no change in the fundamental meaning. But they are considered of sufficient importance that every commentator of the Pentateuch must take them into consideration. The Teacher's Variorum Bible has some thirty references to this version of the Law.

As a race, the Samaritans have dwindled to a mere fraction of their former numbers. Scarcely more than one hundred fifty, sometimes even less, gather annually on the site of the Temple on Mt. Gerizim, which Sanballat built for Manasseh, and which was totally destroyed by a Roman conqueror. The celebration follows the ritual as presented in Deuteronomy, and continues for eight days, the participants living meanwhile in tents. The lambs are slaughtered with shouts of acclaim, and the wool is plucked from the bodies preparatory to the roasting. If any but a Samaritan touches the meat, it is defiled and may not be eaten.

This unique festival brings many visitors from distant parts to witness the remarkable religious fervor of a people who, for more than twenty-five centuries, have carried on this religious rite without change. Although Samaritans are generally regarded as a peculiar people,

there is something admirable in their persistence in holding fast to their ancient rites.

In a review of this offshoot to the orthodoxy of the Hebrews, it is of more than passing interest to recall Jesus' experiences with them. Knowing the enmity between Samaritan and Jew, he preferred, as a rule, to make the journey between Galilee and Jerusalem, east of the Jordan, thus avoiding the crossing of unfriendly territory. But on one memorable occasion, with his followers he entered Samaria, and, at the well of Sychar, told the Samaritan woman the great truth that God is Spirit.

Again, he built his parable of the good Samaritan around one of that race who succored the wounded and stricken traveler. And yet, again, it was a Samaritan, one of the ten lepers Jesus healed, who returned to give thanks. May these incidents not illustrate the definite teaching, "Love your enemies"? At least, it is an interesting speculation.

XII

The Old Testament Canon and Apocrypha

THE canon of the Old Testament was not quickly established. It, too, was a development, an evolution, since it grew out of convictions gained from experience. Canon signifies, primarily, something established as authentic, authoritative — a standard. It took centuries to bring about agreement as to the specific books in the mass of religious literature which were most inspired, authoritative, and actually standard. And even today the canon of the Old Testament accepted by most Protestant churches differs from the Vulgate in that it does not contain the apocryphal writings, which the latter includes.

Through many centuries the sifting process went on among the various groups of religionists regarding the literature which the early Hebrew writers had composed. Certain books, found to be more useful, more inspiring because most surely expressive of God's will, were gradually accorded greater authority. Others fell into disuse and were discarded. At times, leaders of various groups came together to determine the most worthy, the most representative of divine Will, and out of a succession of these councils came the Old Testament as we now have it.

In Nehemiah 8, we find the first word regarding the reading, before all the people, of the Law, the name ascribed to the Pentateuch. This solemn occasion which put the seal of approval upon the first five books of the Old Testament, probably as we now have them, oc-

curred about the middle of the fifth century B.C., that is, after the return from Exile.

Two hundred years later, there were accepted and added to the canon, except Daniel, all the books of the prophets from Amos, first chronologically, down to Joel, whose writings are placed at about three hundred years after the time of Amos. Included among the prophetic writings, but actually of a historic character, were also Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings.

A hundred years after this, at about 150 B.C., a third group, known as the "Writings" was added. Included in these were the Wisdom Books — Job, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes; also Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles, and Daniel. A final determination of the Old Testament canon was made at the council of Jamnia, a Palestinian city near Jaffa, A.D. 90.

If we may judge from the account in the Gospels, Jesus quoted only from the Law, the Prophets, and Psalms. There is no reference in the New Testament to Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, or the Song of Solomon. There is, however, reference in the New Testament to certain books of the Apocrypha.

Thus it was that the Old Testament came into form as we know it, except that several books now separate were originally united, because of sequence of subject-matter. Its development may be summarized thus: From centuries of stories, songs, sagas, and traditions, partially preserved by word of mouth, there emerged finally the historical narrative as found in the Pentateuch, given definite literary form during the fifth century B.C. Following the reigns of David and Solomon was a period of prophecy, which gave us the great books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, all the major and minor prophets, and other writings.

Gradually the test of usefulness and inspiration led

to the acceptance of some, the rejection of others. Religious leaders of the people, assembled in councils at various times, finally agreed upon the present canon which is known as the Old Testament, a Book made up of many books, arranged in the Authorized Version, not as they were written, but rather as to similarity of subject-matter and purpose.

No estimate can be made of the inspiration, heartening, and strength, which lovers of this Sacred Book have, through the long centuries, derived from perusal of its pages. For several thousand years untold millions have gathered from its prayers and precepts, from its songs and statutes, courage to face life's problems, even when no light appeared. Agnostics and unbelievers have scoffed and denied its authority.

The critics who would point to the stories in the Bible of what they regard as gross immorality, should bear in mind that just judgment of a people, emerging from the stark materiality that enshrouded primitive man, cannot be founded upon the standards of twentieth century civilization. It should not be forgotten that the upward trend of the Hebrew people toward the light of spiritual understanding for a score of centuries produced the greatest of all teachers, Christ Jesus.

Another score of centuries during which the spiritual effulgence of his precepts has penetrated the ancient darkness, has seen a tremendous change in the outlook of that portion of the world's population which has accepted him as Lord and Saviour. Manifestly, the just judge will not lose sight of these facts in attempting to measure the value to mankind of the ancient Scriptures.

Even the physical scientists of today are coming to the inevitable conclusion that back of all the material phenomena of the physical senses lies a great Power, the

actual source and substance of the universe. Faith in spiritual reality is growing as modern physical science reaches out farther and farther into a space so vast as to defy comprehension. Professor Jastrow says of this type: "Such faith rises supreme to argument and speculation because it realizes that the highest truth accessible to man is never a solid that can be grasped, but an atmosphere to be breathed."

The Bible is both a book of religion and a history. It is also the world's greatest piece of literature. For millions of Jews, the Old Testament is the only Sacred Book; for millions of Christians, it is the background against which was projected what is to them the greatest of all books, the New Testament. For the Hebrew people, it was the gateway to education and culture, no less than the guide to righteous living.

While its pages are redolent with human affairs, yet its message is ever discernible to the seeing eye. In the midst of turmoil and material striving, the Bible stands today, as of old, the fountain from which continually flows the pure stream of living water to freshen the traveler on life's way, as he journeys out of the slough of despond onward to the mountain peaks of faith and expectancy.

The term "Apocrypha" means, primarily, "hidden" or "secret." It was applied to certain writings on religious subjects during the period extending from about 250 B.C. to shortly after the beginning of the Christian era. The term at first was applied legitimately to certain writings which had the purpose of conveying doctrine not generally accepted by the orthodox Jews. Accordingly, it seemed necessary to keep such writings hidden or secret. Later, after the formation of the Old Testament Canon, the term "Apocrypha" took on the meaning of "spurious," because so many false doctrines had

been presented under the names of various well-known personages.

The Apocryphal books were excluded from the canon of the Old Testament, as determined by the Council of Jamnia, about 90 A.D., on the ground that they were lacking in authority, and consequently in importance. They had, however, long before, been included in the Septuagint version of Alexandria, and later were included in the Vulgate as translated into Latin by Jerome. The books of the Apocrypha remained in this commonly used version up to the time of the Reformation, and the Authorized Version contained these books. They were excluded when the printer no longer cared to print them. Many old editions of the Bible still retain them, although they do not now usually appear either in the Authorized Version or the American Revised Version.

The Roman Catholic Church accepted all the books found in the LXX and the Vulgate, excluding all others as spurious. Many other writings had been made, under pseudonymous authorship for the most part unauthoritative and unrepresentative of the true teachings. These excluded books were termed "Pseudepigrapha," or falsely assigned writings.

And while it is true that there is much in the genuine Apocryphal books that is historically true, and consequently helpful, it is equally true that in the Pseudepigrapha there is little of value. Nevertheless, so important is the subject that scholars have become accustomed to dig amid the chaff of these questionable writings for the kernel of truth which they may possibly contain.

The books of the Apocrypha, as usually arranged, are as follows: Esdras 1, 2 and 3; Tobit; Judith; the remainder of the book of Esther not found in the Hebrew or Chaldee; The Wisdom of Solomon; The Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus; Baruch; The Song

of the Three Holy Children; The History of Susanna; The History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon; The Prayer of Manasses, King of Judah; Maccabees 1 and 2.

While it does not come within the scope of this series to examine closely into the contents of these books, we may explore the contents and makeup of a few by which to formulate a general judgment. Esdras, which is the Greek form of Ezra, in certain chapters presents practically the same material as the final chapters of II Chronicles. The chapters from two to six are original and genuine, while the closing chapters are, for the most part, a transcript of the book of Ezra with some portions of Nehemiah.

One theory as to the purpose of the unknown writer, is that he wished to strengthen the case of Zerubbabel, rebuilder of the Temple, and to clarify Ezra. But it seems that in neither case did he succeed. Scholars are generally agreed that the book has no historical value.

Second Esdras exists only in the Latin, as no Greek manuscripts remain. The larger portion of the book is an apocalyptic vision, in which Ezra deals with certain moral problems common to humanity.

Tobit was probably written originally in Greek, and there are still extant versions in Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew. The theme is laid in Assyria, where, presumably, Tobit, a Jew, had been carried in captivity by the Assyrian King.

It purports to deal with events just subsequent to the fall of Nineveh, but the doctrine set forth, which discourses on the subjects of good and evil spirits, would suggest a later period. While it has the appearance of history, like so many early writings, its purpose was to convey moral lessons, in which it has admirably succeeded.

It is generally conceded that in its presentation of ideal Jewish family life, as found after the return from Babylon, it is among the best. It has, however, the limitation of intense nationalism, hence does not recognize the idea of an infinite God, who loves, provides for, and protects all mankind.

In certain manuscripts of the LXX are found four books which bear the name of Maccabees. Two were included in the early version of the Latin Bible, and so came into the Vulgate. Because of this, the Council of Trent accepted them in its canon. The other two books are much less important. The first book deals with the history of the struggles of the Jews under Mattathias against Syria, and covers the period from 168-135 B.C.

The character of the narrative is such as to convey the impression of trustworthiness, and Biblical scholars have come to accept its statements as accurate. Its author is unknown, and its title derives from the prominence given to the Maccabeans in their heroic and protracted defense of the Holy City. It is generally held that the original was in Hebrew, and later translated into Greek.

Second Maccabees, illogically it seems, deals with a period of history just prior to and overlapping that of the first book, that is, from 176 to 161 B.C. It is generally agreed that its source was a comprehensive history, written by Jason of Cyrene, and of which this is but an abridgment. It is regarded of little historical value.

The third book, also historical, deals with the struggle of the Maccabees for liberation during a period prior to that dealt with in the second book. The fourth book differs from all the others. It consists of a discussion of moral issues, as illustrated by incidents in the family of the Maccabees, in relation to their public services. It has little historical value.

Baruch was presumably written by the faithful secre-

tary of Jeremiah, although there is scant proof of this assumption. It is regarded as of little historic value. It contains the Epistle of Jeremiah, a letter said to have been written by the prophet, and sent to the Jews in Babylon. This is the most important part of the book, although its authorship is still in the realm of the uncertain.

Of the books classed under the name Pseudepigrapha (falsely ascribed), it may be said that they were trouble breeders to the ancient worthies, striving to eliminate the false from the true. One of these books, known as the Assumption of Moses, purports to give an authentic account of Moses as a prophet, when, in a vision, he foretells for Joshua the course and events of history. In another, one of the sons of Jacob appears and tells the history of his life, including much of a fantastic and unreliable nature. Among many less important books were stories purported to come from Abraham, Job, Isaac, and other great personages in Hebrew history. Appropriately were they named the "falsely ascribed."

XIII

The Silent Centuries

WITH the account of the return of Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem, and of the important part he played in re-establishing Zion, the Hebrew Bible closes as a record of historical events. This has been attributed to a seeming cessation of divine revelation, that is, until the coming of Jesus. Because of this, there was nothing of importance to record! Be that as it may, the student of religious history finds many outstanding events, as well as noble characters who, during those four hundred years, did much to prepare the world for the acceptance of the message of Christianity. The four centuries from Ezra to Jesus thus assume a position of importance in relation to the great events that were to follow.

The captivity of the Jews, accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar, in 586 B.C., was the beginning of a movement in that race commonly known as the "Dispersion." With that event, the national life of the Jews as an independent people ceased; and to this day they have been a race without a country. A result during the following centuries of this dispersion was the division of the Jews into three general sections: the Babylonian group, known as the Eastern Dispersion; the group at Alexandria, known as the Western Dispersion; and the group in Jerusalem, made up for the most part of those who returned from exile with Ezra.

As we have seen, the Jews who were led into captivity by the King of Babylon were far from slaves, in the com-

mon use of that word. They were permitted to live their lives much in the way of their own choosing, and to many of them, material prosperity came in a large measure. The scholarly pursuits of the more learned led in time to the development of an intellectual class that exercised great influence upon the religion and forms of worship of their people wherever found.

Under the mild rule of the Persian monarchs, which followed the downfall of Assyria, their liberties and prosperity were extended, and they spread out until in all the important cities of the East they became very influential, both because of their business acumen and resultant prosperity, and also because of their culture and learning. Babylon became the center of intellectual Jewry.

While monotheism was strengthened by the experiences of the exile, later, under the influence of the Persian national religion, there entered into Jewish theology as we have seen the doctrines of angelology and demonology, setting forth the conflict between good and evil, which were so constantly encountered in human experience. Numerous traces of this influence are found in the New Testament.

Babylon of that time has been aptly termed the Athens of Judaism. An important development among the learned Jews was the growth of an amplification of the Mosaic law, known as the Mishna. Need arose for more definite and specific rules of conduct than those contained in the Pentateuch. This led to a development, which was in effect an extension of the ancient code to cover the details of daily life. So cumbersome was this revision that in time it became burdensome and restrictive of personal liberty. No doubt it was this characteristic of the Mishna that caused Jesus to declare that it made the law of none effect. It was this work of the intellectuals in their effort to extend the law that weakened the Jewish religion as a

vital sustaining form of worship. The spirit had become submerged in the letter.

Another Babylonian institution, the synagogue, supplanted the temple as the center of worship. Wherever Jews were found, this became the accustomed place of worship, as well as the center of education; and the rabbi, scribe, and priest supplanted the prophet.

When Macedonian Alexander swept the world in his unprecedented career, he took with him Greek culture and learning. At Alexandria, as has been related, gathered a group of Jewish scholars who readily accepted the Hellenic culture and philosophy, as well as the Greek tongue. Greek soon became the language of the people in this great center of commercial and cultural activity. In consequence there grew up the demand for a Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the result was the translation of what is known as the Septuagint Bible.

As Judaism and Greek philosophy met in this center of learning, a reconciliation of the two systems of thought became necessary. Out of this necessity came such books as the "Wisdom of Solomon," in which the effort was made to reconcile the philosophies of Plato and the Stoics with the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Notable scholars dwelt in this atmosphere of religion and learning. Among these, Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, stands out as a master in the effort to reconcile the Logos of the Greeks with the wisdom of the Hebrew Scriptures. The popularity of Philo spread far afield, and scholars flocked to him from distant parts of the world. Proof of the wide dissemination of Philo's teachings is had in the fact that Paul encountered it in his Apostolic pilgrimages. His denunciation of it in Colossians is marked, as was John's answer to the Alexandrian in the opening verses of the Fourth Gospel.

The influence of this Greek influx was, on the whole, to

liberalize the thought of Jewry, to shatter somewhat the formalism and dogma into which the religion of the Jews had drifted. In this way was preparation made for the coming of the revolutionary teachings of the Nazarene. And while his teachings among the Jews in a great measure fell upon deaf ears, the Gentile world, prepared by the Greek infiltration, was far more receptive.

The third group of the Jews of the Dispersion consisted of those who remained in Jerusalem. With the entry of Greek culture, following Alexander's conquest of the city, arose division and dissension among the people.

Certain classes, the aristocrats and Sadducees in particular, taken by the new philosophy, began to adopt Greek customs, dress, language, and philosophy. This weakened their devotion to the one God in the formalized worship of the day. The common people reacted to the Greek invasion in a directly opposite manner. They resisted it to the hilt, holding firmly to the old ways, even strengthening their devotion to their former worship.

But anon the scene changes. When Syria, a Hellenized country, succeeded Egypt as the overlord of Palestine, there arose the determination on the part of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian King, to compel Jerusalem by force to accept Greek culture and religion. When, with this in view, he moved on the Holy City, the aristocrats and the Sadducees joined in purpose with him, and disaster followed. The temple was desecrated, traditional rites were forbidden, destruction reigned, and the city was plunged into the depths of woe.

But as has so often happened in human history, the tyrant overplayed his part. In an obscure town, a certain loyal and aged priest, Mattathias, refused to sacrifice upon the Greek altar set up in his yard. When an apostate Jew tried to force the issue, the priest slew him and

fled with his family to the mountains. To him flocked great numbers of sympathizers, so many that Mattathias found himself at the head of a force of sufficient strength to combat the invader.

Mattathias was soon succeeded by his son Judas, a man of high character and great military skill. In fact he has been classed among the world's greatest military commanders. With powerful strokes he drove back the Syrians in one hard-fought battle after another, until he at last freed his people and restored the ancient Temple.

The great military skill of Judas gave him the name, Maccabaeus, that is, The Hammerer. This period of history brought out the books of the Maccabees, which appear in the Apocrypha, but which, for their historical value, many scholars believe should have been included in the canon of the Old Testament.

Prosperity followed the victories of Judas. Meantime, Rome was supplanting the Greek influence in political and military affairs, although she had appropriated the essence of the Hellenic culture. Her influence rose like a dark shadow from the West, until finally it dominated the eastern world; and Palestine became a dependency of the city by the Tiber.

At least one contribution of Rome aided the spread of Christianity. The reign of civil law and order supplanted the chaos which had so long characterized the affairs of the East. With the coming to Palestine of the Roman eagles, however, there disappeared the last vestige of political independence for the stricken people. Persecution often prevailed, and a type of cruelty arose under Roman protection which could have no more striking example than that of the merciless Herod.

XIV

Manuscript Sources of the Bible

OF THE ancient manuscripts of the Bible, many hundreds are now available to scholars. But none of these, either of the Old Testament or the New, are originals. All are copies of earlier writings. Accordingly, the word "manuscript" as now used by Biblical scholars usually signifies a copy in the original language of an earlier writing.

The determining of the age of a given manuscript is not an easy matter. The oldest, and therefore the most valuable, are in Greek, written in capital letters and with no division into words. These are called "uncials." Later manuscripts were written in a running hand and therefore are called "cursive." The older writings had no ornamentation; the later ones often were beautifully illuminated and ornamented with miniatures and elaborate initials. Obviously, for the scholar, the plainest writings without ornamentation or illumination have the greatest value.

One is surprised to learn that the earliest of the Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts extant bear a date as late as the tenth century of the Christian era; they are, in fact, much later than the earliest of the New Testament manuscripts. This is something of a handicap for the critical scholar, but it is no doubt true that the great care exercised through the centuries by the copyists of the Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts has given them to us practically in their original form — at least in the

form in which they were written after vowels were added.

It appears that a revision of the Palestine manuscripts from the time of Ezra went on with little interruption until about the tenth century of the Christian era. These revisions were due in part at least to the changes that took place in the Hebrew alphabet itself and also in the method of writing.

The old Hebrew was a "consonantal" language, that is, the words had no vowels. These were supplied by scholars, but uncertainty as to the vowels required to convey the meaning left much room for uncertainty to creep in as to the exact significance of a given word or passage.

The old Hebrew disappeared during the exilic and post-exilic periods; and thereafter, the earlier books of the Bible were copied in Aramaic, the tongue of the Jews during the Persian, Greek, and Roman periods of their history. The Aramaic was a Semitic language, closely allied to the ancient Hebrew. It was spoken by Jesus and was the common tongue of that time. After the older copies had been put in the best form that Jewish scholarship could attain, they disappeared. Consequently, the form of the Old Testament, so far as manuscripts in Hebrew are concerned, is practically that arrived at a thousand years ago.

With the New Testament manuscripts and the Greek Versions of the Old Testament, the situation is quite different. Into the search for early writings there has entered an element of adventure and romance. And the end is not yet. Only a few months ago came the startling news from Vienna that the director of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo had pulled from a pile of dusty manuscripts in a bookshop "the oldest Bible in the world," a second-century manuscript in Greek. If this



FRAGMENT OF A GREEK PSALTER

Written on Papyrus about the Third Century of the Christian Era — One of the Oldest Bible Manuscripts in Any Language

be true, it antedates, except for fragments, the oldest previously known by more than a hundred years. The book in which the writings were bound, however, is not complete.

Of the oldest and most authoritative of New Testament manuscripts, three are best known and of the greatest value. They are commonly designated as the Vatican, the Sinaitic, and the Alexandrian. These have been used by scholars in the various revisions of the New Testament, although none of them was available at the time of the preparation of the Authorized Version.

These manuscripts are in Greek, but some scholars contend that back of these fourth and fifth century copies were originals in Aramaic, the language of the masses of the people in the time of Jesus.

The Alexandrian manuscript has long reposed in the archives of the British Museum. Not long ago the Sinaitic manuscript was purchased from Russia by popular subscription of the British people, and it is now treasured in the same institution. The Vatican manuscript has long been in the possession of the Roman Catholic Church, the most valued possession of the famed Vatican Library.

Of lesser importance, and yet of considerable value, is a manuscript known as the Codex Ephraemi which was brought to France by Catherine de Medici, and is now held by the Bibliotheque Nationale. This is a palimpsest manuscript — that is, the original writing on the parchment was partially rubbed off to give place to other writings, in this instance to theological discourses of St. Ephraem, a Syrian Father.

The scarcity of parchment led to this method of erasure and re-use for many centuries. As traces of the original writing were discernible, an effort was undertaken in 1834, with the use of acids whereby the original writ-

ings were made legible. This copy is thought to be as old as the Alexandrian, and contains the major part of both the Old and New Testaments.

One other manuscript of considerable importance, known as Codex Bezae, is in the University Library at Cambridge, Eng. In 1581, a friend of Calvin, Theodore Beza, noted Biblical scholar, presented it with a statement in his own handwriting, that it was obtained from the Monastery in Lyons. It is of later date than the four already considered and is written in both Latin and Greek. It bears the marks of many corrections with numerous interpolations in the text, most of which have no relation to other manuscripts. The question arises whether some of these may not have been copies of lost sayings of the Founder of Christianity. The possibility greatly interests many Biblical scholars.

All these manuscripts are uncials, of which group there are more than one hundred extant. Of the cursive type, more than two thousand are now available for the use of scholars, some of which, although of later date, are regarded as of great importance because of their manifest accuracy.

Of the three most important manuscripts of the New Testament, that in the Vatican is probably the oldest. It has reposed in the Vatican Library at Rome for five hundred years or more, and until the time of Pope Pius IX had been most jealously guarded. By his permission, it was made available for the use of scholars, and it has been carefully examined by the revisers of the Old and New Testaments.

It is not complete, lacking portions of Genesis, of the Psalms, and all of the New Testament after Hebrews 9:14. While this copy does not contain the disputed verses at the end of Mark's Gospel, the scribe who copied it was evidently aware of the existence of the doubtful

passages, for he left sufficient space for them to be written in.

The Sinaitic manuscript has a romantic history. Dr. Tischendorf, a great German scholar, while on a visit in 1844 to St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, found a basketful of old manuscripts in the library of the convent, where they were to be used for fuel, as had other baskets of the old writings. Upon examination, he found sheets of the Greek Old Testament, yellow with age. His intense interest in these so aroused the suspicion of the monks that no more were given him. His appearance with the old parchment in Germany created a sensation among Biblical scholars and further search was made at the Monastery, but without success.

A second visit by Tischendorf to the Monastery brought little result. Finally, in 1859, having enlisted the interest of the Tsar of Russia, he again returned to the search. In the library of the Monastery, he found nothing of note.

But when invited by a friendly monk to visit his cell, conversation turned on the old manuscript, and the monk declared that he had read the version, and brought out a large bundle wrapped in red cloth, which to Dr. Tischendorf's unutterable surprise contained what he had seen on his first visit, parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and several books of the Apocrypha. After much negotiation, permission was finally gained to remove the precious writings, and for many years, in fact until their recent purchase by the people of Britain, they reposed in the Library of St. Petersburg.

As in the case of the Vatican manuscript, the doubtful passages at the end of Mark's Gospel are omitted, but unlike the former, no space is left for their inclusion. The critics who claim that these passages are unauthorized

base their assertions upon these two manuscripts. All other early writings include these passages, and this position is supported by Eusebius, one of the most reliable historians of the early Church.

The Alexandrian manuscript, known as Codex A, is the latest of the three. On the first sheet is an inscription in Arabic stating that it was written "by the hand of Thekla, the "Martyr," that is to say, it was copied by her, probably in the fifth century, from an earlier, perhaps an original, document.

Cyril Lucas, Patriarch of Constantinople, presented it to Charles I of England, in 1628, and it has since reposed in the British Museum, which has by far the richest collection of early Biblical manuscripts. The Old Testament is nearly complete, but parts of Matthew, John, and Corinthians are missing. Photographic copies of these three codices and many others of less importance, and now in possession of most of the important libraries of the world. And while as has been said none of the earlier manuscripts were available for the translators of the Authorized Version, all are now accessible to critical scholars.

Profound and accurate scholarship has thrown much light upon the sacred Scriptures in recent decades, the effect of which has been to intensify rather than to weaken their authority and the holy purpose of their message.

The Background of the New Testament

IN ORDER the better to understand the significance of Jesus' life and teachings, with which the New Testament is concerned, it is desirable to consider briefly the background against which his revolutionary doctrines were projected. The government of Palestine, the condition of the people, and especially the religious status of the country at that period, are subjects to be briefly explored.

With the victory of the Roman eagles, Palestine passed under the rule of Rome about 60 B.C. The heroic struggles of Judas Maccabaeus had but temporarily saved the country from the onslaught of the Syrians. Then Rome, although decadent herself, when her earlier grandeur is considered, became the master.

Assisting Rome in this conquest was one, Antipater, head of the Herodian family, then ruler of Idumea, a territory south of Judea. This cunning schemer had so gained the good will of the authorities in Rome that with the fall of Palestine before the invading armies, he was made procurator of Judea. Two of his sons were also honored with official positions, the elder, Phasaël, as Governor of Jerusalem, while the younger son, Herod, was made Governor of Galilee. These sons held their official positions even after the death of Antipater, in 44 B.C.

When the Parthians from the East invaded Palestine, Herod escaped to Rome, and through his persuasive intrigue with the authorities was appointed king of the

Jews. His authority over his new kingdom was gained, however, only by stiff campaigns.

Herod was a crafty, scheming ruler, cruel to the last degree. He it was who, when the Babe born in Bethlehem alarmed him lest he lose his position and power, ordered the slaughter of every male child under two years of age in that region. It has been said that this deed, cruel as it was, was so unimportant in comparison with many other incidents in Herod's life that it was not even recorded in Jewish history.

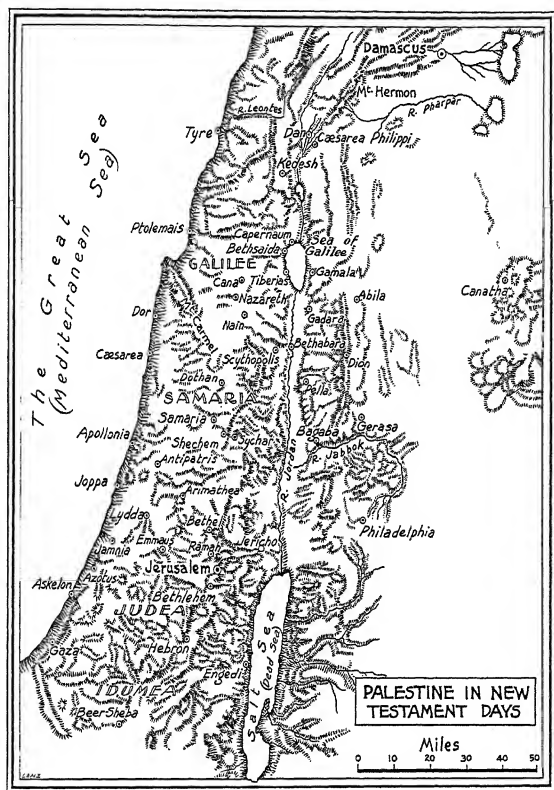
In spite of his cruel nature, Herod possessed so extraordinary a degree of enterprise as a builder, that it brought him the title of Herod the Great. And it must be admitted that he gave to Palestine a glory that it had not before known, if glory is to be measured by noble structures.

Herod rebuilt Samaria, naming it Sebaste, for the then Roman emperor. He also built a grand city and harbor at Caesarea on the Sea. Many strategic points were fortified. In Jerusalem he built himself a magnificent palace. The commercial position of the city was reconstructed on an impressive scale.

But the crowning masterpiece of this truly great builder was the overshadowing Temple, which Herod got well under way, although it was not completed until 65 A.D. This, the third on the site of Solomon's noble structure, was the magnificent Temple of which Jesus predicted that not one stone should be left upon another, a prophecy that was completely fulfilled when the city was destroyed by the Roman, Titus, in 70 A.D.

There is little doubt that a chief purpose with Herod in his unprecedented success as a builder was to placate the Jews, thereby winning their consent to his continued rule.

Herod's son Archelaus succeeded to the position as ruler, but his dominion was limited to Judea, Samaria,



PALESTINE IN NEW TESTAMENT DAYS

and Idumea. So harsh was his rule that Rome was persuaded to banish him. Following this misrule came the line of procurators, and the establishment of Judea as a Roman province, although the administration of civil laws still remained in charge of the Jewish courts.

At the head of the system was the Sanhedrim, a kind of supreme tribunal. Weighty matters, however, which concerned the empire were referred to the procurator. This system, in course of time, brought to Palestine Pontius Pilate, who made his seat of government at Caesarea. On important occasions, like the celebration of the Passover and other similar events, the procurator came to Jerusalem with his soldiers to keep the peace. History is repeated today when, to preserve law and order, English soldiers attend the Samaritan Passover on Mt. Gerizim.

Philip, another son of Herod the Great, ruled successfully over the territory east of Jordan and of Galilee for nearly two score years. Another son, Herod Antipas, was made procurator over Galilee and Peraea. He displayed many of the traits of his father, so that the characterization "that fox" applied to him on one occasion by Jesus seems wholly justified. Yet he maintained his official position for nearly half a century. It was this ruler who put to death John the Baptist. This was but one of many cruel deeds laid at his door.

Rome, as the ruler of the world, was more than a military tyrant. Commerce was an important factor in her success as world empress; for from her commerce came much of the revenue necessary to support her powerful military organization in Jerusalem and elsewhere. The Roman officials made a point of gaining support from the aristocracy in Palestine, especially from the Sadducees and priests. But the masses were rebellious and unhappy. The heavy taxes imposed upon the people were farmed out to tax-gatherers, a group lacking in sympathy for

the poor. Graft and extortion were common, and the name "tax-gatherer" became anathema to the masses.

So oppressed did the people become under their relentless masters that they turned more earnestly than ever to the religion of their fathers. As no relief seemed imminent from any earthly source, the ancient prophecy of the coming of a Messiah to relieve their suffering and establish the true kingdom was renewed.

Wisely, Rome had refrained from interfering with the religion of the people, nor did she attempt to alter the main current of their industrial and social life. It was sufficient to keep order in a province that returned to the Imperial Government a rich return in taxes. The people were ignorant, as education, for the most part, was confined to the priestly class.

The Scribes and Pharisees, friends of the common people, fanned the flame of discontent, helping them to intensify their prayers for the coming of a Messiah who should break the yoke of political bondage which they so heavily carried.

To be sure, the Messiah for whom the faithful Jews longed bore little resemblance to the one who came. Their concept was of a mighty one, surrounded with regal splendor, who should at once smite the enemies of the Chosen People and restore the great glory of days long past.

How little prepared the people were for the coming of the humble Nazarene, the Gospel story discloses. Yet there were enough of the lowly and receptive to receive the message, the most important ever given to humanity, to propagate Christianity and to support it with a church destined to take it to the whole world.

In the Jerusalem of the time of Jesus was a conflicting condition of thought. Against the aristocracy and the Sadducees in general, who stubbornly championed the

old Judaic formalism of worship, was arraigned an infiltration of heathenism from the ruling powers, supported by certain Sadducees and priests who sought favor of Rome through an obsequiousness that was as patent as potent. The extreme poverty of the masses, coupled with intense resentment of the corruption creeping into the Jewish worship, bred a condition which but waited for a spark to inflame it into rebellion and strife.

While Judaism in Jerusalem was thus torn and divided, outside it was united and robust. From the time of the Dispersion, Jews had penetrated many parts of the Roman Empire, then most of the known world. They had multiplied and gained great prosperity in many communities.

It is said that at the beginning of the Christian Era, Jews constituted at least one-tenth of the population of the Roman Empire. In fact, so important a part of the empire had they become that Roman officials saw the wisdom of leaving to them their religious and social customs, when not in direct conflict with the civic well-being of the Empire.

That the people, for a time at least, looked to Jesus as a deliverer from political subjection, there can be no doubt. When he seemed to fail them in this respect, they turned away; and the condition of unrest and dissatisfaction gained new impetus until that terrible day when Titus and his Roman eagles overwhelmed the city, and Jerusalem as head and center of Judaism ceased to be.

XVI

Development of the Four Gospels

MARK

OF THE four biographies of Jesus which form the essential teachings of the New Testament, the first three are known as Synoptics — that is, as the term implies, they contain much of the same or similar material. They are in general agreement in their narratives of the Master's teachings and works, although with the discrepancies which naturally occur in accounts of the same events when written by different authors.

In the Authorized Version, the Gospel of Mark is not placed first, yet scholars very generally agree that it was the first gospel to be written. To be sure, some of Paul's epistles bear a prior date, but as they deal more explicitly with the explication of Jesus' teachings than with his works, it seems desirable to put first things first.

What then of Mark, the man? Who was he? What did he do? And how did it come about that his name was attached to the earliest Gospel? It is generally believed that John Mark was the son of a Christian Jewess who lived in Jerusalem, and that her home was a gathering place for the early Christians.

It has also been said that it was John Mark who was with Jesus the night of his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, and who escaped, leaving his cloak in the hands of one of the party of captors. Be that as it may, it is certain that Mark attended Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey to the Gentiles; and that he left them

at Perga in Asia Minor because of disagreement between the Apostles as to their further course. That Paul and Mark were reconciled and again traveled together is evident from Colossians 4:10.

Moreover, it is conclusively evident that Mark became the intimate friend of Peter, and he has often been described as interpreter for that impetuous disciple. Also it is commonly held that John Mark accompanied Peter to Rome, and remained there until the death of both Paul and Peter. Some authorities claim that Mark was also at Alexandria with Peter, but if so, the early writers, Clement and Origen, are silent upon the subject. It is certain that Mark was with Peter for a considerable period, and in consequence became the recorder of Peter's sayings regarding the teachings and works of the Master.

That the Gospel of Mark was written for the Romans is as certain as that Matthew's Gospel was written primarily for the Jews. Proof that it was first of all designed for Gentile readers lies in the frequent use of Latin and Aramaic words translated into the Greek. The remarkably vivid style of the Gospel indicates that its primary source must have been one who saw Jesus' works and heard his words. None other could have so directly and so vividly told many of the incidents recorded in the Gospel.

In fact, so vivid are the word pictures that one could readily believe that they are the record of a participant in the events recited. The Gospel is strikingly forthright in its style, and the word "straightway" appears more than fifty times. Eusebius states, on the authority of Clement of Alexandria, that the Gospel was submitted to Peter and approved by him.

While Mark omits entirely the genealogical data contained in Matthew, almost all the narrative material appears in the other Gospels. The omissions amount to not

more than thirty verses. Mark differs in his style, from the other Synoptists. The language of the Greek manuscripts is rough, reflecting the Greek spoken by the Jews. These faults of language are not found in Matthew or Luke as both had the advantage of correcting the earlier writings.

There is little in this Gospel that is peculiar to it. The healing of the deaf man, and of the blind man at Bethsaida, the dullness of the disciples refusing to take bread, the dispute among the disciples, the incident of the young man with the linen cloth — these and a few incidents in the trial before Pilate constitute the chief statements not found in the other Synoptics.

Mark's Gospel deals largely with events of the Master's ministry in Galilee and with the closing events of his career in Jerusalem. Mark had no desire to present Jesus as the "Messiah, 'the son of David and Abraham.' " Rather did he choose to present him "as the conquering Saviour, the incarnate and wonder-working Son of God, living and acting among men; to portray him in the fullness of his living energy." (Peloubet's Bible Dictionary, page 386.)

The date usually assigned to the Second Gospel is before the fall of Jerusalem, in 70 A.D., probably between 62 and 66 A.D. Some scholars insist that the Gospel was written originally in Aramaic, and in support of this conclusion they point to several Aramaic words, carried over without translation even in the Revised Version, as Boanerges, Talitha cumi, Corban, Ephratah, Abba, Rabbi; also the poignant words uttered on the cross, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani. Aramaic proper names and grammatical forms peculiar to that language are also in evidence. For these reasons, is made claim that the original must have been written in Aramaic.

Others assert that since no one of the early Christian

Fathers makes mention of an original manuscript in Aramaic, there is little likelihood of that having been the original language. Moreover, claim these contestants, the Greek of the extant manuscripts possesses a freshness and vivacity not to be found in a translation.

The Greek of Mark has all the characteristics of an original. The problem of the original tongue, however, is not vital to the message. We have it in English in a vigorous and forthright style that carries the stamp of authority — and, after all, that is the most important thing.

In what is known as the “Synoptic problem,” the question is raised, Why do Matthew and Luke follow Mark so closely after the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, if they did not have before them either the Mark Gospel or the traditional document “Q,” which is said to have preceded all the Gospels? Both Luke and Matthew tell the story of the birth of the Master; of this Mark says nothing. And where it is claimed Mark ends abruptly at the eighth verse of the last chapter, Matthew and Luke continue the narrative.

While these problems are of deep interest to the scholar, the essential value of the Gospels lies in the spirit of the Nazarene’s teachings, and the great fact that when his revelation is understood and applied, it meets humanity’s need in every particular.

MATTHEW

As we have seen, while Matthew is not the first of the Gospels chronologically, there is good reason for placing it as the First Gospel in the canon of the New Testament. Its completeness, character, and purpose are of such importance that it deserves the first place in the biographies of the Way-shower. Renan attached such importance to this Gospel that he declared it “the most important book

of Christendom—the most important book which has ever been written.”

Scholars are generally of the opinion that the Gospel in its present form was the work of Matthew, and that he first wrote a background which was afterward edited, and probably elaborated, into the Gospel as we know it. The earliest extant manuscripts of this Gospel are in Greek, and there is a divided opinion whether it was originally written in that language or in Aramaic. However that may be, the importance of Matthew to all Christians is not in its language, but rather in its contents.

It seems certain that the original author of the background of the Gospel was Levi, son of Alphaeus, who changed his name to Matthew on becoming a disciple of the Master. He was a collector of customs, or toll gatherer, at Capernaum, which lay on the road from Damascus to the Mediterranean sea. This was during the reign of Herod as Tetrarch. That he was a man of considerable means is indicated by his having given a feast to Jesus, apparently a somewhat elaborate affair, as it aroused the anger of the “Scribes and Pharisees.” Of his subsequent career nothing authentic is known.

The consensus as to the source of this Gospel is that Matthew the author, had before him the Gospel of Mark and the document “Q,” the Logia, or sayings of Jesus, also written by Matthew himself. This contention is based upon a statement of Eusebius, quoting words from Papias written about 140 A.D., to the effect that “Matthew, however, composed the Logia in the Hebrew dialect, but each one interpreted them as he was able.”

In corroboration of this statement, Irenaeus says that Matthew among the Hebrews published a Gospel in their own dialect, when Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding a church. Other early writers also make a reference to a writing by Matthew in the Ara-

maic language. Accordingly, the case seems to be well authenticated that there was a writing by the Apostle Matthew from which was evolved the precious Gospel now in our possession.

Unmistakably, this Gospel was written by a Jew for the Jews. Frequent quotations from the Old Testament (the only Bible at that period), and references to the long-promised Messiah as having appeared in the person of Jesus, make certain the nationality and convictions of the author.

Also the long roster of the ancestors of Joseph traced back to King David, and even to Abraham, bespeak the writer's racial tendency. But his vision was broader than Jewry. He, alone, tells of the coming of the Gentile Magi; he with Luke recites the healing of a Gentile, the centurion's son; and he even foresees the admission of Gentiles to the Kingdom, while some Jews will be rejected. The Gospel is to be taken to the whole world and all are to be baptized in preparation for their reception into the Kingdom.

An important feature of Matthew is the grouping together of the sayings of the Master into the Sermon on the Mount. Here in a compact form is presented the essence of Jesus' teachings upon topics of chief interest to mankind. It is a challenge to right living, unparalleled in sacred writings. It is a summary of all that pertains to the transformation of thought necessary to the experience of the heavenly state upon which Christianity places so much emphasis, and to the attainment of which all earnest Christians are of necessity committed. It has been truly said that the First Gospel aims at a synoptic view of Jesus' teachings as a whole rather than a chronological statement.

This Gospel was written at a time when dark clouds hung heavily over Israel. Jerusalem was sorely beset, per-

haps had already fallen, under Rome's irresistible blows. The final coming of the Christ had, in belief, been retarded. Israel had fallen from her high estate. It was no longer "the sphere of the divine Kingdom." Iniquity was rife. Christianity had not as yet taken definite form. Matthew's call is for steadfastness in the face of disaster and apostasy; to trust God, whose reign is forever, and in whose worship alone is to be found the peace and salvation for which mankind is forever seeking.

"The Lord's chariot wheels may tarry, but the Lord Himself is all that Christians have believed Him to be. He is the Messiah of Israel's hope, as the fulfillment of prophecy proves. He is the true seed of Abraham, the last redeemer, as Moses was the first, the true Son of David, the final Judge of His people and the world" ("A New Commentary on the Bible," page 125).

The value of the First Gospel in no small degree lies in its Jewish outlook. From its well-turned passages, we are enabled to learn of the Master's earthly experiences in greater measure than from either Luke or Mark. He unites the old Israel, his inheritance, with the new Church, the Church of Christ.

The old evolved through greater spiritual unfoldment into the new. Mark and Luke wrote primarily for Christians who were Gentiles. Matthew was pleading for the remnant of Israel, while at the same time he envisaged the spread of Christianity to the uttermost parts of the earth. Matthew drew striking pictures of the background of the Master's life and teachings which are absolutely necessary to a clear understanding of his mission and ministry. Without these, it would be quite impossible for us to see our Lord's life as it was actually lived, or to understand his teachings as they were presented all too often to ears dull of hearing.

In many ways, Matthew presents a more satisfactory

biography of Jesus than do the other Gospel writers. And how charmingly the narrative runs! How peaceful the language, and, withal, how intimate! "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem."

Appealing accounts of the healing of sin and disease, of many wondrous works, the story of the transfiguration, the Lord's Prayer, the account of the resurrection: all these, and much more, are found in the pages of this priceless record of him who came to set men free from the restrictions which so long and so unnecessarily had bound them. It is little wonder that this Gospel gained a great popularity among the struggling band of Christians who gave their all to establish the Gospel of "on earth peace, good will toward men."

LUKE

So FINAL and complete is the evidence regarding the authorship of the Third Gospel that practically all scholars attribute it to Luke, whom Paul describes as the "beloved physician." It is generally conceded that he was a Greek, a man of learning and culture, the friend and companion of Paul, as Mark was of Peter. His Greek has been called the most nearly perfect of all the evangelical writers; and the preface to his Gospel has been characterized as the most finished piece of writing found in the New Testament.

Scholars insist that terms found in his Gospel furnish sufficient proof that he was a physician, as Paul called him; and it is not unlikely that his conversion to Christianity resulted from his having encountered the Apostle to the Gentiles on one of his missionary journeys. It is plainly evident that he accompanied Paul on a part of his second missionary journey, and probably was with

him in Rome, at least for a portion of the time of the Apostle's imprisonment in the Imperial City.

As appears in the preface to the Gospel, Luke was not an eyewitness of the events he recorded; but he had fuller information regarding some of them than the authors of the earlier Gospels. Accordingly, his writings contain much not found elsewhere. Nearly a score of the parables, and six of the miracles, have their only record in Luke's Gospel.

Many versions of the teachings of Jesus had arisen in the three or more decades following the crucifixion. Many different accounts of the events of his career were exploited and had found so great credence that there was much confusion both as to the words and the works of the Nazarene.

Realization of this condition, and perhaps also the uncertainty as to the facts, expressed by his friend Theophilus, led Luke, scholar and convert, to make careful search of all the sources at hand and to record accurately his findings. The result is the most nearly complete biography of the Master found in the New Testament. But the historian is also in large measure the disciple and follower of the Great Personality whose happy biographer he became.

That Luke clarified and unraveled many tangled skeins of conflicting stories about the marvelous man whose mission and purpose, apart from his immediate followers, was only beginning to be understood, there can be no doubt. In this he rendered to humanity an invaluable service.

As in the case of the other Gospels, the date of its appearance is somewhat uncertain. Some scholars place its date before the fall of Jerusalem — that is, prior to 70 A.D. Others would place it somewhat later. There is no internal evidence to indicate its precise period; but the

argument is general that it was produced prior to the Fourth Gospel, and in some town where the Greek influence was prevalent.

The material, peculiar to the Third Gospel, which Luke has preserved for us, has been characterized as among the most beautiful treasures we possess. In a great measure this is due to his desire to make his collection as complete as possible. And, furthermore, his purpose to record events with accuracy makes for the best chronological order found in the Gospels.

Renan pronounced Luke's Gospel "the most beautiful book that has ever been written." And he also says of the style of writing, "The narrative flows with an ease and grace unmatched by any other New Testament historical writing." Renan further pronounces the life of the Master "at once the most important, the most interesting, and the most fascinating, of all topics of historical and literary study" (Peloubet, page 372). How could it be otherwise since it is recognized that Jesus presented to humanity the truth about God and man, the most important message that ever has been, or ever can be, delivered to humanity?

Luke deals more fully than the other evangelists with certain incidents surrounding the birth of the Saviour. The birth of John the Baptist, the appearance of the angel to announce to Mary the wondrous experience that was to be hers, the tracing of Jesus' ancestry through Mary's father (Heli), past David, past Abraham, to Adam — these topics are recorded by Luke alone.

In fact, it is estimated that more than half of Luke's Gospel is not related by the other evangelists. The Sermon on the Mount is in somewhat different order than that adopted by Matthew. The portions not paralleled in the earlier Gospels deal largely with the Peraean ministry and the journeys toward Jerusalem.

Among the parables found in Luke are: the Good Samaritan, the Importunate Friend, the Barren Fig Tree, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Piece of Money, the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Ten Lepers, the Unjust Judge, the Publican and the Pharisee. Among the incidents peculiar to the Gospel are: the mission of the Seventy, the parable of the pounds, the story of Zacchaeus, the account of a penitent robber, and the walk to Emmaus.

In the narrative of the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, Luke goes further than Mark in detail and scope. In the reference to the Samaritan woman, in the return of the lepers to give thanks, and in the story of the unfortunate traveler, certain critics see Luke's effort, by introducing the Samaritans, to make plain the universality of the Gospel set forth by the Nazarene. Even members of a despised race were to find in it the mercy and healing which knows neither race nor creed.

Commentators call attention to the fact that Luke's Gospel cannot be Pauline in the sense that Mark's Gospel was Petrine. Paul was a convert, not an immediate disciple of the Master. Accordingly, Luke could gather from his companionship with the Great Apostle not the testimony of an eyewitness, but rather the conclusions arrived at by an ardent convert who was exploiting the teachings of the Master in accordance with his understanding of them. His testimony was hearsay.

On the other hand, Mark companioned with Peter, who had heard the words and received the inspiration which could emanate only from him who declared himself to be the Son of God. Nevertheless, Luke's manifest zest in gathering the story, his accuracy in relating it, and his great devotion to the task he had set himself, perhaps at the instigation of a dear friend, all have resulted in a Gospel authentic and complete, breathing in no small

measure the inspiration of a student-convert who accepted in fullest measure the faith and spirit of the Great Teacher, himself.

To prove that Luke wrote primarily for Gentiles, Sir William Ramsay points out that Luke varies the account of the paralytic being let down through a broken mud roof by substituting the word "tile," to make the story intelligible to Western readers.

As Luke is the only evangelist who connects his narrative with secular events, he has invited much discussion from scholars as to his accuracy. For example, the account of the "taxing" in the story of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem is by some declared unhistorical. Objection is made that Augustus did not order a general enrolment; or if he did, the order did not apply to Herod's kingdom; and if it did so apply, there was no reason why Joseph and Mary should go to Bethlehem; and that no census was taken before A.D. 6-7. Protagonists of Luke's accuracy base their defense upon the wording of the Gospel itself.

A convincing corroboration of Luke's statements has come to light from the recent discovery of papyri in Egypt, which state that periodic enrolments by households in a cycle of fourteen years did actually take place in that country (see Hastings, page 559). May we not then, from this one incident of the proving of Luke's accuracy in historical narrative, justifiably accept his statements as the considered conclusions by a scholarly and devoted recorder of events surrounding the birth and career of the world's greatest character?

JOHN

UNTIL recent times, there was little doubt expressed regarding the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and this doubt is not conclusive. Accordingly, we may well ac-

cept the general conclusions of scholars that John, the beloved disciple, wrote this Gospel, probably during the latter part of his long residence at Ephesus. Those who disagree have yet to prove their case. The date of the Gospel is uncertain, but is usually placed toward the end of the first century of the Christian Era.

Little is known concerning John, apart from the Gospel references. He was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman of Galilee, who apparently was in comfortable circumstances, for he was the owner of a boat. Salome, John's mother, is referred to in Mark as having ministered to Jesus. It also appears that John's early home was at Bethsaida, on the northern coast of Galilee, near the mouth of the Jordan.

That this disciple was exiled to Patmos during a period of persecution of the early Christians is generally conceded. Later, during a milder reign in Rome, he returned to Ephesus, where he lived to an advanced age. If his birth be placed between 1 and 5 A.D., as is done by some commentators, John's life spanned virtually all of the first century.

Tradition has built many stories around this appealing personality, one being that he was immersed in a caldron of boiling oil, from which he escaped unharmed. Another exploited by the poet Browning, in his "Death in the Desert," places him, when very aged, in a cave in the desert, where he was recalled from a deep trance to recount the stirring incidents of his youth in the company of the Master.

Jerome pictures the aged disciple, too feeble to walk, as being brought into the church saying repeatedly, "Little children, love one another." The reply of Jesus to Peter's query (John 21:23), "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" is cited as a prophecy that John would be translated.

The persistent building of tradition and legend about this inspired disciple is a sure proof of the great importance attached by the early Christians to the words of him who leaned on Jesus' bosom. And to this day, the words of John have assumed a greater value and deeper meaning to many Christians than the statements of the other evangelists.

Many are convinced that John saw more deeply into the real meaning of Jesus' ministry than did the other disciples; and that the spiritual import of Jesus' words and the deep significance of his works were better understood by John than by any other evangelist. How often does he record Christ Jesus' claim of unity with the Father! How clearly does he set forth the assurance which Jesus entertained of God's fatherhood of all!

The Fourth Gospel is unique in several particulars. It supplements the Synoptics, and has no substantial disagreement with their statements. It does, however, extend the period of Jesus' ministry over three years or longer, while the events recorded in the earlier Gospels seem to deal with but a single year of his life and works. In the introduction to his translation of the Fourth Gospel, Weymouth says of another distinguishing quality of John's writing:

"As to the person of Christ, it must be owned that although the Fourth Gospel makes no assertion which contradicts the character of Teacher and Reformer attributed to Him by the Synoptics, it presents to us a personage so enwrapped in mystery and dignity as altogether to transcend ordinary human nature. This transcendent Personality is indeed the avowed center of the whole record, and His portrayal is its avowed purpose" (page 238).

John was convinced that the development of Christianity must take place outside of Palestine; that first of all

it would be accepted by the Greeks. Hence in the very opening verses he identifies the Christ as the Logos or divine Word, thus spiritualizing the logos of Stoic philosophy. This quite naturally made strong appeal to the Greek thought. An avowed purpose of the evangelist was to make clear to all believers that through faith in Jesus as the Christ, they would be enabled to lay hold of eternal life. Running throughout the Gospel is the conviction that Jesus had revealed the way to gain that life which is eternal, the only real and lasting life, and that way is through knowledge of God and His Christ.

The return of Jesus to earth was long awaited by the early disciples, but in vain. The delay weakened confidence in the prophecies of the Old Testament. John makes plain that the coming of the living Christ had already taken place; that the Christ had already entered the hearts of all believers. Thus did the Jewish prophecy of an eternal Messiah become a spiritual fact, a transcendent experience; and John foresaw that the unfoldment of this state of consciousness would constitute the growth and development of Christianity. That is to say, John saw Jesus as the Christ, the demonstrator of the Truth, a fact which he told his followers, if persisted in, would set them free from material bondage and limitation.

John does not recite the parables of the earlier Gospels. Goodspeed says of this Gospel that it is a parable in itself, in the sense that "it presents an interpretation of Jesus in the form of a narrative of his ministry." And this commentator holds that John was aware that in the Jewish title "Messiah" is not found the highest spiritual significance of Jesus, "but by finding for it an expression in Greek philosophical terms (that is, the Word, or Logos) he transplants Christian thought into Greek soil." And he regards this position on John's part as a long and bold step in the development of Christian theology.

That John's paramount purpose was to strengthen faith in Jesus as the Christ is plainly discernible throughout his Gospel. Did he not specifically declare, after acknowledging the incompleteness of his book, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:30, 31)?

The omission of certain important events in the life of the Nazarene recorded by the other evangelists is notable in the Fourth Gospel. He makes no mention of the miraculous birth of Jesus, neither does he mention the transfiguration, the Last Supper, or the night in the Garden of Gethsemane. Many miracles are omitted. On the other hand, John records many incidents not mentioned by the others, such as the wedding at Cana, the washing of the feet of the disciples, and the raising of Lazarus. John records at length the controversies between Jesus and the Jews, who are represented as frequently interrupting the Master with queries and objections while he was expounding his doctrine.

In considering these differences, the student should recall that John was writing at a period considerably later than the others. He had before him the earlier Gospels. There was no need to repeat what had already been so well written. These statements were accepted as fact.

Out of his own experience as a loyal and intimate disciple, he wrote such reminiscences as would most successfully meet the need of the rapidly changing panorama of Christian activity. This called not for repetition, but for explication of the message which John was convinced came from God through the human agency of Christ Jesus.

That John brings out the human side of Jesus—his weariness, his love for the family at Bethany, his tender solicitude for his mother at the Cross—does not detract

from — but rather enhances — the value of his message. He also glorifies certain of the miracles as none other has, and he makes the loftiest claims for the Christ as the Good Shepherd, the Light of the World, the Bread of Life, the Resurrection and the Life. No writer of the life of Jesus could do more.

XVII

The Acts of the Apostles

THAT the author of the Third Gospel wrote the Book of Acts is believed by a large majority of prominent scholars. Internal evidences, contemporaneous statements, and the testimony of the most effective early Christian writers, all point to Luke's authorship of this important book. In substantiation of this conclusion, scholars point to the use of "we," indicating that the author was an eyewitness to important happenings.

The first missions to spread the Gospel of glad news were to the westward, among the Greeks and expatriate Jews, who it appears were most susceptible to its reception. The importance of this message and its propagation so impressed one that he wrote in detail and with historical accuracy, the story of Paul and his various journeys made for the one purpose of carrying to the Gentile world the Gospel story.

On several of these journeys Luke was the intimate companion of Paul, and consequently wrote with the assurance of one who knew the events which he recorded. On these travels he had accompanied the Great Apostle to Antioch, Caesarea, and Jerusalem, where he learned from witnesses of the events immediately following the resurrection.

Luke also was cognizant of the spread of Christianity to Cyprus and Galatia, and to other points in Asia Minor, to Macedonia and Achaia, and finally to Rome itself, center of the first century world. The Third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles constitute the story of the rise

of Christianity and its spread into the Greek and Roman worlds. While both are in a great measure historical, the spirit of Christianity breathes through their pages, at once convincing the reader of the depth of the author's conviction that Jesus was the Christ, sent of God to redeem the world.

The date of the appearance of the Acts has been fixed only within certain limits, ranging from 63 to 80 A.D. There is strong evidence which would place its appearance subsequent to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. But, as yet, no conclusive evidence has been produced as to the precise year. The place of its writing is also conjectural. It may have been written at Ephesus, at Athens, or even at Rome. The title of the book is also somewhat misleading; for while it deals with the experiences of both Peter and Paul, more space is devoted to the latter than to the former. Although Paul is called an Apostle, he was not with Christ Jesus during his ministry.

The book opens with a minute description of the events on Olivet when the risen Jesus prepared his disciples for his final disappearance in the Ascension. Then followed the election of a disciple to take the place of Judas.

The experience of Pentecost added to the spiritual assurance of the disciples, and prepared them for the rigorous road ahead. Peter's stirring sermon uttered on the eve of these transcendent events, was followed by the conversion and baptism of several thousand converts. And the days immediately following were marked by many healings and conversions to the new teachings which had so miraculously appeared to them. These days saw the beginning of the activity of a movement which became the Christian Church.

The Acts of the Apostles really gives the history of the Christian movement from the Ascension to about 65 A.D.

It may quite naturally be divided into two parts: the "Acts of Peter" and the "Acts of Paul." There is some repetition, but from chapter thirteen the division is apparent. The journeys of Paul are described with a vividness that convinces the reader that they are told by an eyewitness and a participator in the stirring and oftentimes dangerous experiences.

So similar are many of the experiences of Peter and Paul that commentators have declared the author to have been some other than Luke, some zealot who endeavored to show the equality of Peter with Paul. But the "we" portions would convince the reader beyond reasonable doubt that they were written by a companion of Paul. The author, evidently a man of superior literary ability, would scarcely have used "we" if he were merely a recorder of events in which he had no part. Moreover, the style of Acts is so closely identical with that of the Third Gospel that there is little room for doubt as to the common source of these two important books.

A remarkable and appealing story is the account of Paul's conversion. There are few more arresting instances in the New Testament of the regenerating effects of the Christ when received with humility by an earnest and forceful character. The story of the Council of Jerusalem, of the vindication of the teaching of Paul, the great import of the first steps in that movement which was to take Christianity to Rome, and in due time to the whole world — these events were all described by that one whom Paul calls the "beloved physician" (Col. 4: 14).

Two chief purposes of the author are apparent to the reader of Acts, his primary desire to strengthen the faith of his readers in the teachings of the Founder of Christianity, while at the same time reciting the historical facts incidental thereto. Like all true historians, he desires to

present an exact and complete picture of the most important period of human history. To be sure, some things are left untold. We should like, for example, to learn more of the fate of Peter and of Paul, of the early happenings to Christians in Rome, of the dates of certain important events.

Luke followed in detailed order the missionary movement through Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and finally to Rome. Once established in the Eternal City, it was inevitable that it should have overspread the remainder of the Roman world. He keeps notably to his course. Nothing tempts him to stray into a mere relation of the secular history of the times. The splendor of the Roman Court lures him not at all. With fine fidelity, he holds to his purpose to tell the story of the spread of Christianity to the Gentile world.

It early became manifest to the Apostles that Christianity was not to be established in Jewry. Judaism was far too materialistic, too closely bound to ritualism and doctrine, to accept the revolutionary teaching of the Gospel news. When Paul arrived at this conviction, the step inevitably followed to take it to those who had ears to hear and were prepared for its reception. Paul used the Greek language to spread his doctrine, as the Romans had used it to carry their culture to the East. It is evident that he foresaw Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire, but his vision was even broader. He saw it as embracing the whole world. How could universal truth be circumscribed within the limits of an empire?

The reader of Acts is impressed by the relation of many cases of healings, of healings that seem nothing short of miraculous when viewed in the light of material science, but as inevitable and divinely natural when viewed in the light of the reliability of the great truth which the book emphatically portrays. No other account

of the early days of Christianity is so impressive; none other is so convincing as the account of this Gentile, whose conviction of the priceless value of Jesus' message was the incentive to write to the same "most excellent Theophilus," to whom had been addressed "the former treatise," the Third Gospel, the best and most complete story of the development of the Christian church during the third of a century immediately following the hallowed incident of Olivet. Indeed, the world owes a great debt of gratitude to this "beloved physician."

XVIII

Paul and His Epistles

ABOUT the middle of the first century, a converted Jew, small of stature but great of purpose, by trade a tent maker, sat in a room in Corinth writing to a friend in Thessalonica. His message was one of cheer and encouragement to the little band of people whom he had converted to his conclusions regarding the life, mission, and disappearance of one whom he had come to regard as Lord and Saviour of mankind, sent of God to redeem the human race.

The writer of the letter was Paul. The doctrine he had promulgated was his interpretation of the life and teachings of Christ Jesus, the Messiah. The writer of the Epistle had little thought that his message was the first step in the authorship of a book which was destined to influence the lives of hundreds of millions of people; that it would be preserved for countless centuries, a precious message for the enlightenment and inspiration of Christians throughout all time.

This message contained hortatory prayers sprung from the heart of the Great Apostle, written with the tense purpose to aid his friends in holding fast to their newly accepted views of God and man, imparted by him while sojourning in their midst. To those believers with divers needs, he sent his message of comfort and encouragement, with wise advice for each according to what he discerned the need to be.

We can easily imagine with what eagerness the letter was read, reread and studied by the faithful band. But all was not well with them. Doubt had entered; adverse doctrines had made their sinuous way among them, with the result that some had fallen away, had become lax and indifferent.

“Who is this fellow anyway who practiced such strange doctrines?” they may have queried. “Whence came he, and what proof does he offer of the truth of his preachments?” The story of these doubts and apostasies reached the ears of Paul, still in Corinth.

Another letter went forth. The day of the Lord had not yet come. The forces of evil had not yet become an embodiment to be destroyed by the Messiah. There was no excuse for idleness. The people should go back to their occupations, for only those who earned their bread were entitled to eat.

In these long letters to the Thessalonians written out of the desire of the Apostle to cherish and protect the seeds he had planted in the hearts of his friends in a city of the North, we find the beginnings of the New Testament — that is, of Christian literature. Of such moment are they that we must pause to inquire as to the type of man who inaugurated so great an enterprise.

Practically all we know of Paul is contained in the Acts of the Apostles and in the letters Paul wrote to various groups of believers whom he had converted while on his missionary journeys to various parts of the Roman world.

From these sources we learn that Saul, as he was named, was a native of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a maritime province in the southeast of Asia Minor; that he was born at the beginning of the Christian Era; that his father was of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Pharisee. He acquired Roman citizenship, and was sent to Jerusalem to be edu-

cated with Gamaliel, one of the greatest teachers of his time, as instructor. He spoke Aramaic and Greek with equal facility.

Apparently inspired by doctrines other than those imparted by the gentle Gamaliel, he became a fierce exponent of the Jewish doctrines and a bitter opponent of Christians and their teachings. He even went to the extent of cruelly persecuting the newly converted Christians whenever opportunity offered.

The story of Paul's miraculous conversion is graphically told in the Book of Acts. After a long period, spent no doubt in grave contemplation and serious mental readjustment, Saul, now known by his Latin name, Paul, reappeared as a chief expounder of the teachings of Jesus. The same fiery zeal which had characterized his persecution of the early Christians now found expression in the promotion of the new faith which he had accepted with a profundity of conviction that nothing could unsettle.

Then followed a career undertaken for the sole purpose of carrying the Gospel message to the receptive in all parts of the Roman Empire, a career without parallel in the history of Christianity. The hardships encountered, the dangers passed through, the discouragements met, the rebuffs and persecutions heaped upon him would have overwhelmed one less conscious of divine protection and support.

Many there are who have felt that without Paul, the Christian religion might have fallen; but this conclusion, of course, springs from a failure to recognize that when a divine purpose unfolds, a messenger is found to do the will of Him whose one purpose is to bless, protect, and care for His children everywhere. Had not this man of Tarsus appeared, we may justifiably conclude that another would have been raised up to meet the demands

for a messenger to carry to a world, woefully in need of salvation, the good news of the Gospel story.

We do not, perhaps, easily picture the conditions under which Paul began his great task. The Roman world was sunk into the very depths of materiality. The ruling class too often lived lives of profligacy and cruelty. The masses of the people were little better than slaves. In Jerusalem, the new religion was flouted by those who held to the strict observance of the Jewish ritual.

The chief agitator of this revolutionary doctrine had perished on the cross. His followers were hounded, and even slain. Yet these appalling conditions before which the heart of a less courageous convert might well have quailed, daunted this converted Jew not at all. Convinced of the importance to mankind of this new doctrine, Paul set forth with a courage that springs from no other source than an unshakable conviction of God's will and equal assurance of His protection.

Thus prepared and fully armored in the spirit, Paul set out upon a career which established the Christian Church so securely that it withstood the storms of persecution, bitter and cruel, that for three centuries were heaped upon it. Yet this ardent little sect, termed Christian, fired by the zeal of conviction, spread throughout the earth! Bauman says of it: "It is the one spiritual organization that has survived twenty centuries without varying its principles or its purposes" ("Life of Paul").

A pertinent question invariably arises in any considered estimate of Paul's labors. Would the Christian doctrine have found a foothold in Jewry sufficiently secure to have enabled the Church to survive and grow into a world-wide religion? Paul and Peter, and other ardent believers, were evidently convinced to the contrary. Hence their conviction that growth must be made outside the influence of a religious body bound to a set doc-

trine, and embound in traditions and formulas, creeds and dogmas.

As a persecutor of Christians, Saul was a fanatic. As a promoter of Christian faith and doctrine, he exhibited the selfsame zeal and enterprise. He was naturally an organizer, a leader of men. His whole life was colored with an outstanding religious fervor. He assures us that he had formerly lived for the Law, with thought centered upon the Temple. That Jewry refused to partake of his newly found doctrine was a sore rebuff to him. It was this stern resistance that determined his career and gave him the opportunity to become the Great Apostle to the Gentiles.

It is of little value to compare the lives of the disciples. Paul's capacity for persuasion and conviction makes him unique. And the part played by Peter in this greatest of dramas none will gainsay was of primary importance. Paul did not say, as did Peter, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Nor did he say to the lame man in the Temple, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." But he did speak to uncounted thousands the words that healed and comforted them, and convinced them that God is at hand to meet humanity's needs.

Paul was a man of deep convictions and unfaltering courage. When he learned, probably while in Syria, that an enemy had sowed tares among the good seed he had planted at various places in Galatia, he arose to the occasion with his usual promptitude and vigor.

Jews from Jerusalem, who had accepted Christianity as an adjunct of Judaism, had spread the doctrine that only those who had conformed to certain Jewish rites were really entitled to carry the Gospel afield. And furthermore, they undertook to discredit the words and

works of Paul on the ground that he was not a true Apostle, because not one of the Twelve.

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul's defense is one of the most vigorous found in any of his epistles. Deeply stirred, he acted immediately and effectively. In strong language he denied that Christianity was available to Gentiles only via the way of Judaism. He pleaded for the broader view. Christianity was for all who accepted its spirit. He argued with great effect for spiritual liberty and freedom to accept the Gospel without dictation from any source.

"Walk in the Spirit," was his admonition. But he urged the brethren to deal mildly with those who may have slipped from grace. The Apostle's compassion for the delinquent was clearly manifest, despite his admonition to stand resolutely with their new-found faith in God.

During his third mission to the Gentiles, Paul sojourned for a long time at Ephesus, then an important center of industry, frequented by travelers. Here a letter came to him from Corinth telling of the dissensions that had arisen there among the brethren. Factionalism had developed, and the church was split. Some followed Peter, some Paul; others followed Apollos. Besides, something of the gross immorality which characterized a heathen city of that time had crept into the church. Paul's response was a stern rebuke to their division and immorality. Whoever planted or nurtured the truth, God gave the increase. Only the righteous could enter the kingdom of God.

In the precious chapter I Corinthians 13, he rebukes the claim that salvation is won through the gifts of tongues or prophecy. There is but one way: that of faith, hope, and charity. In succeeding chapters he gives a restatement of the resurrection and its significance, and

closes with a personal message exhorting the brethren to steadfastness in Christ.

In this message, Paul's skill and patience as a teacher are clearly manifest. No other letter enables the reader so clearly to understand the problems which beset the early Church, and the consummate skill and kindness with which he pointed the way to their solution.

A portion at least of II Corinthians was written because Paul's first letter did not have the results he had anticipated. There was still a remnant of rebellion against him. What was the source of his authority since he had not been an Apostle with the Master? They still preferred the authority of those who had been the personal followers of Jesus.

And it seems that for a time a majority of the converts of Corinth turned to other leaders. But, nothing daunted, Paul again glories in his endowments, even boasts of his achievements. Nothing can shake his confidence in the rightness of his personal experience. And he makes clear the results of disobedience.

The many autobiographical references in this letter are revelatory of the inner life of the Apostle. His religion is the outgrowth of personal experience, which nothing can vitiate or destroy. He boldly defends his ministry, glories in his infirmities, ministers to the faithful, and describes his spiritual experience.

Paul's message to the Romans is unlike either Corinthians or Galatians. It is a treatise rather than a letter, calmly considering the needs and conditions of the times. Most commentators would agree that Romans is Paul's masterpiece so far as theological discussion is concerned. It appears that this letter was written largely for the purpose of preventing the backsliding from the Church that had characterized his experience in the East.

Neither the law nor wisdom, alone, could insure the

way of salvation. Righteousness was the one course. God had now, through Christ Jesus, opened the way whereby all might become righteous. It is said that Paul's text on salvation, "the just shall live by faith," became the central thought in Luther's Reformation.

The highest standards of Christian living, love, humility, and self-denial, are appealingly set forth in the closing chapters. Romans presents for the Christians of today, as of the first century, an inspiring epitome of Christian teaching for all seeking salvation through righteous living.

After Paul was imprisoned at Rome, his only means of communication with the churches and groups was through his letters, or by personal messengers. His first letter written under these unfortunate conditions was dispatched to the Christians in Philippi, by the hand of Epaphroditus. The circumstances were touching. The church at Philippi was the first established by Paul, and there was a fine bond of friendship between the group and their much loved benefactor.

Accordingly, when his friends in Philippi learned of Paul's imprisonment, immediately they sent funds to meet his needs. The letter was written as a grateful acknowledgment of their kindness. It conveys a message of love and good cheer and encouragement. And he takes the opportunity of warning them against the various types of error that confront them.

Paul's greatest desire was for the spiritual well-being of those who had found Christ. He never lost the opportunity to hearten and encourage such as were receptive to his message. He conveys to his friends assurance of his serenity and peace of mind. If his career is to end, he is sure of salvation and association with the Christ whose cause he has effectually championed. He is ready. Words precious to Christians everywhere are found in this letter,

which overflows from a heart filled with love for the brethren. It has appropriately been termed, "a Psalm of Gratitude."

The message to Philemon was the first personal letter Paul wrote, that is, so far as his letters have been preserved. The circumstances are interesting. Philemon was a merchant of Colosse who had accepted Paul's teaching. A slave, Onesimus by name, had robbed him and fled; but on coming in touch with Paul at Rome he was converted to Christianity. Convinced of the man's sincerity, Paul sent him back to his former master with a letter asking that he be forgiven and accepted as a brother in the faith.

Paul's finesse and gentleness are brought out here in an appealing manner. Onesimus was to return to Colosse in company with Tychicus. Although Paul had not been in that city, as the true missionary that he was in the breadth of his interest in all who were naming the name of Christ, he took occasion to send a message to the Christians there. The message, in part, is to correct rumors that with the church at Colosse all was not well.

Accordingly, he preaches of the universality of the Christ and admonishes the Colossians to seek sanctification through preparation of the heart. To the false theosophic ideas that had been disseminated among them, Paul replies that only in the Christ is divine satisfaction to be found. All service must be in the name of Christ Jesus, the only mediator between God and men.

It appears that with Onesimus on his journey from Rome to Colosse went another friend of Paul, Tychicus by name, also the bearer of one of Paul's famous letters. While this was addressed to the Christians in Ephesus, where the Apostle had long labored, it appears to have been directed to all Christians in Asia and even farther afield.

Unlike some others of the Apostle's letters, it does not deal with a specific error nor does it promote a particular doctrine. Rather it is a treatise dealing with the need for unity of all churches, Jewish and Gentile, in the one Christ. Many commentators regard this epistle as carrying on to a completion the doctrine set forth in Romans. It emphasizes the idea that the Church is the fulfillment of the divine purpose.

Among those converted by Paul at Lystra was a lad, Timothy by name, who became a close companion and earnest disciple of the Apostle. So greatly did Paul trust this young convert, that when the Apostle left Ephesus to carry his mission and works farther afield, he entrusted Timothy with the oversight of the Christian group in the city of Diana. The letter carried to Timothy deals with the duties of the pastor in order to conform to the demands of true Christian doctrine. It charges Timothy as to this duty, and the closing portion relates to the conduct of Church affairs.

Second Timothy has a quite different note. It evidently was written during Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, when dark shadows were closing in upon him. With an intense desire to see again his beloved Timothy, in four passages he urges his disciple to come to him. While he sets forth his lonely condition and recounts his sufferings, he enjoins upon his faithful convert to walk constantly in the ways of godliness.

This letter was apparently written near the close of Paul's career, and is the last of his letters. It closes with farewell greetings to his friends whom Timothy would meet. While there is discernible a note of sadness in its tone, yet there is no least suggestion of doubt as to the rightness of his position and the complete soundness of the doctrine he had so valiantly espoused.

Paul's letter "To Titus, mine own son after the com-

mon faith," is brief and was probably written in Ephesus in 67 A.D. Titus was a Greek, and from the frequent mention of his name in the Apostle's letters, he was an approved convert and a close personal friend. He had often been entrusted with messages to the churches in Asia Minor, and tradition holds him to have been Bishop of the church in Crete.

Apparently, the church in Crete had fallen away from the straight course, and Paul takes occasion to administer stern warnings and a severe rebuke to the delinquent members. The chief emphasis is laid upon personal holiness. Mere belief is not sufficient. Christianity must be made practical in the daily life. It was a message to be delivered to the converts through Titus, who had been left in charge of the affairs of the church in Crete.

This brief review of his Epistles but touches the great subject of Paul's contribution to the Christian Church, and to its literature. While altogether his letters are but a small volume, some forty octavo pages, yet more has been written about him than about any other author, with the single exception of Shakespeare. Why?

The answer is found both in the quality of his conviction and the character of the man; also in his assurance that he had found the way to salvation, that he had gained definite knowledge of God through Jesus, the Christ, and that because of this personal experience he was in duty bound to carry his convictions to all ready to receive the message. Nothing but a sure sense of the divine presence could have carried him through the many trying experiences which marked his career.

While the Christian Church has had many converts ready to make the greatest sacrifice, even to make the supreme sacrifice for their convictions, few others, if any, have through so long a period faced such grave dangers with such fortitude and to such purpose. His is

a marked example of man's ability to endure when divinely inspired.

As a historical character, Paul is one of the greatest men of all time. His theology — that is to say, his interpretations of the teachings of Jesus — has gone far in determining the course of Christian doctrine. His exposition of spiritual truth was accompanied with a practical application to human affairs. He was a moralist, and his terse and sententious sayings have become watchwords for the militant Christian.

Paul has often been called a mystic, because of his great assurance of his relationship with God and his ability to invoke divine aid. But should this not rather be characterized as something apart from mysticism? For this was to him an experience explicable and open to all who should accept the divine presence as an established fact, and the manifest relation of God and man. His inner life was, through the Christ, indisputably related to God, his divine source.

That Paul's experience was marked by prophetic revelation, there can be no doubt. An example of this is found in the unfoldment of his views on resurrection, from the rather crude statements found in Thessalonians, to the exalted views set forth in II Corinthians. As he pondered Jesus' teachings on eternal life, his conclusions rose to sublime heights, where he learned what Life really is.

Some of Paul's strongest messages were written while in bonds. The prison cast no shadows over his indomitable courage. To him came messages from far and near. From his hand went forth messages correcting, rebuking, admonishing, heartening — all to one purpose: to assist the brethren to stand firm in their new-found faith, that by their example the multitude might become inspired. John Chrysostom, a distinguished commentator,

said of the Apostle, "the future will never see another St. Paul."

No adequate portrait of Paul's features has been made. A medallion of the second century represents him in a position facing Peter. His mobile character seems to have defied adequate depiction. The transition from Saul, the persecutor, to Paul, the author of II Corinthians, or the eighth chapter of Romans, does not lend itself either to the pictorial or the plastic art.

The lineaments of his face, the contour of his head, will for all time, as in the case of Jesus, be left to the imagination of the artist. But his character stands out in his glorious epistles more impressively and more enduringly than could be represented by the most skillful hand. In his life, as presented in his epistles, we have his portrait complete and permanent.

One of the most thoughtful and inspiring of a host of Pauline biographies is that by Canon Farrar. He thus characterizes the Great Apostle, Vol. 1, page 12: "Paul, energetic as Peter, and contemplative as John; Paul, the hero of unselfishness; Paul, the mighty champion of spiritual freedom; Paul, a greater preacher than Chrysostom, a greater missionary than Xavier, a greater reformer than Luther, a greater theologian than St. Thomas of Aquinas; Paul, the inspired Apostle of the Gentiles, the slave of the Lord Jesus Christ." What more complete portrait of the Apostle could one desire?

XIX

Hebrews and the Revelation of John

WHO wrote it? is one of the first questions asked regarding any piece of literature. The importance of this question of authorship is often placed above content—a situation which does not conform to the best logic. For the value of any literary effort is above all else the essence of its message.

Is it true? Does it possess something of permanent value to humanity? Is it inspiring, informative, entertaining, artistic? These are the queries that should have first place in determining the value of any writing.

This rule is a prime necessity in making a survey of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Notwithstanding its attribution to Paul in the caption of the book in the Authorized Version, there still remains a difference of opinion among Bible scholars as to the authorship of this, one of the most important books in the New Testament.

Certain facts, contend some scholars, are patent from internal evidences: that the author was most probably an Alexandrian Jew, a man of sound scholarship and of great culture, who had an intimate knowledge of the history and character of those to whom the letter is addressed: that Timothy was a friend; and it seems conclusive that the author was of the second generation of Christians. Some writers of the early church, however, and some of the nineteenth century as well, ascribed the work to Paul; others, to Barnabas.

Among the recognized Bible students of this later period who definitely credit Paul with being the author

of Hebrews is Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science; and the writer of this article is in complete accord with Mrs. Eddy's views on the subject. The Latin historian, Tertullian, speaks of it as "Barnabas to the Hebrews." Later its authorship was assigned to Clement of Alexandria, and by others to Priscilla, wife of Aquila, to Apollos, and even to Philip, the evangelist.

Confirming the authorship by Paul, as indicated in the New Testament Canon, is a statement by Conybeare and Howson in their excellent "Life and Epistles of St. Paul." After discussing the authorship pro and con, they say:

"Finally, we may observe that, notwithstanding the doubts which we have recorded, we need not scruple to speak of this portion of Scripture by its canonical designation, as 'the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews.' We have seen that Jerome expresses the greatest doubts concerning its authorship: Origen also says, 'the writer is known to God alone': the same doubts are expressed by Eusebius and by Augustine: yet all these great writers refer to the words of the Epistle as the words of Paul."

But from the problem of authorship, to gain its lesson and its inspiration, we may turn to the Epistle itself. It was written in Greek, as refined and beautiful in its language as any portion of the New Testament. The date of its appearance is probably toward the end of the eighth decade of the Christian Era, at a time subsequent to the terrible persecutions to which the Christians of Rome were subjected during the reign of Nero.

It was addressed to Christians who were Hebrews, that is, to Jews who spoke the Hebrew tongue and had adopted Christianity. Other opinion is to the effect that

the Epistle refers to the sufferings and persecutions of the Christians in Jerusalem, just prior to the destruction of the city in 70 A.D.

The purpose of the author is to rouse the Hebrews who were inclined to drift from the fundamentals of the Christianity which they had adopted. The dangers of apostasy are set forth with much emphasis. In fact, this appears to occupy the mind of the writer, rather than the form of Christianity itself. That the falling away was toward some form of Judaism is apparent in the author's constant presentation of the superiority of the new covenant to the old. What the old presented only as shadow, as formalism and promise, the new embodies as all that is perfect and final in religion.

The author explains the Messianic priesthood of Christ and its advantages over the old Jewish practice. He finds in the Old Testament (the LXX) that Jesus is really the final high priest, in an order older than Aaron, or even than Abraham, himself. Jesus, as the true high priest, made the supreme sacrifice of himself, and thereafter took his seat at the right hand of God.

The author of Hebrews defines faith, and emphasizes the necessity of holding to the Christian's hope in the face of severest persecutions, for the reward of the faithful is sure. Through faith, men have laid hold of the unseen realities and now, although martyred, they are witnessing the struggles of the faithful, with the expectancy that they will endure to the end. "Faith is for him [the author] a force working toward ethical ideals, a power which enables men of every nation and class to live lives of noble self-denial for righteousness' sake, 'as seeing him who is invisible'" (J. R. Willis, *Hasting Bible Dictionary*, p. 340).

The Epistle ends with exhortations and warnings. The

faith and courage of the martyr must be to them a living example. The writer tells of Timothy's release from prison, and sends salutations for himself and his brethren.

REVELATION

No OTHER question of authorship of New Testament literature has occasioned so intense and so prolonged a controversy as the "Johannine problem," especially in relation to the Apocalypse, "the Revelation of John." From the days of the early Christian writers to the present time, the question of authorship of this book among scholars has been argued, with a definite conclusion still wanting. To be sure, there are many partisans, some quite assured as to the accuracy of their conclusions; but the fact that scholars still disagree leaves the question for many without a definite answer.

In an excellent little book by Professor Goodspeed, "The Story of the New Testament," is found a simple solution accepted by many. For, as it has been pointed out, the question of authorship is far less important than the quality of the message conveyed. Professor Goodspeed cuts the Gordian knot by simply stating that among the early victims of the renewed persecution of Christians, presumably near the end of the First Century, a Christian prophet, John by name, living at Ephesus, was arrested on the charge of being a Christian, and exiled to the near-by island of Patmos.

So confined, he was no longer able personally to comfort and console the Christians in the churches of Asia Minor, whose presbyter he had been. Accordingly, he wrote letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor, his messages finally expanding into a book. He adopted as his mode of writing the apocalyptic form, a kind of prophecy wherein symbolism is largely employed.

It is impossible, say some scholars, that the author of

the Fourth Gospel which is written in refined and beautiful Greek could by any means have lapsed into the rather unlettered Greek of the common people in which the Apocalypse was written. It is like comparing the language of an Addison with the speech of an untutored farmer. A solution of this problem may be that while the vision was John's, as it undoubtedly was, and of which the writer is thoroughly convinced, it was recorded by another, perhaps a student, at John's behest.

It was in the latter days of the beloved apostle that this vision appeared and he might well have employed an amanuensis. This seems a rational solution of the problem, for it conforms to the authority of the book itself as to its source. It leaves the authorship with John and furnishes logical explanation of the great difference in the literary style of the Johannine books.

The apocalyptic was not a new type of literature. A portion of the book of Daniel is cast in the same mold. Many apocalyptic writings were produced in the last centuries before Christ, and during the early centuries of the Christian Era many others appeared. Quite often the name of some notable personage was attached to the writing, the better to attract public attention.

The Revelation of John was selected for the New Testament Canon because of its apparent authorship and also because of its genuineness as a true, spiritual experience. It stands unique in New Testament literature, and it seems a fitting close to this most sacred of all Christian books.

All that comes before deals with the teachings of Jesus and their application to the solution of human problems; with righteous living and the salvation resulting therefrom; with the historical facts of the Messiah's presence in the flesh, and of redemption through faith buttressed by understanding of the Christ message.

The Apocalypse goes further. It deals with the terrific struggle between externalized evil and personified good, which goes on until finally overcome by "the blood of the Lamb." There follows the reign of the triumphant righteous when, evil destroyed, the great army of the redeemed, "which no man could number," continues forever in the divine Presence, in everlasting joy and unending worship.

The purpose of the author to encourage and hearten those struggling against the intensified evil of that day has brought like comfort and consolation to Christians through all the ages since, for they find in this unique book profound assurance that to those who overcome evil, lasting joy follows.

The Apocalypse reveals a series of visions seen "in the Spirit," and therefore spiritually inspired. It has been pointed out by scholars that this type of literature is the succession of prophecy, with this difference: the Prophets were assured that God's plans are carried out through the instrumentality of a co-operation with mankind in the present world.

Apocalyptists, on the contrary, having become discouraged over the then state of affairs mundane, did not despair, as they were convinced that God would vindicate Himself through catastrophic intervention, that is, through direct interposition for the destruction of evil. The Book of Revelation is an endless fountain of inspiration for the patient and persistent student.

Letters of Peter, James, John and Jude

OF THE early life of Peter, it is possible to construct a fairly complete picture from the Gospels and the Book of Acts. He stands out as an ardent and impetuous, if not always heroic, figure among the disciples of Jesus. After the disappearance of Jesus, he assumed a certain leadership in the beginnings of the early church. With the appearance of Paul, however, Peter seems to have been less conspicuous; and his later years are somewhat obscure. The mention of him as being present at the Council at Jerusalem, as related in the Book of Acts, is the last certain word regarding him.

There is some uncertainty among scholars as to the authorship of the Epistles which bear Peter's name, but general opinion attributes them to this valiant disciple. Many believe that by the reference to "Babylon" in his writings, he is speaking of Rome. This places him in that "Eternal City," where much has been made of this probable fact.

Tradition has it that after leaving Jerusalem Peter labored at Rome as a missionary for a quarter of a century, and was martyred — crucified — in the latter part of Nero's reign. Several of the most prominent Christian writers of the second century testify to this tradition as reliable. They believed that the first Epistle was written in Rome about 65 A.D.

Its purpose was to encourage Christians, even under severe persecution, to hold fast to their faith, to obey the civil authorities, to give no offense, and to better prepare

themselves spiritually for the trials to come. The letter contains several personal references to Jesus, as though written by one who was with him and witnessed his works. It has been termed Peter's spiritual biography. It is a message of urgent, practical advice rather than of doctrine.

As to the authorship of II Peter, there is less general agreement. From internal evidences as to idiom, style, and character, it would seem that the two Epistles could not have been written by the same person. For example, the first Epistle contains many more references to the Old Testament than does the second, and the sense of intimacy with the personal Jesus is much greater. The conclusion that Peter was not the author, but that it was written by someone who may have known the disciple and heard him preach, is gaining ground. This, of course, would indicate that the date of its appearance was much later than that of the first Epistle.

In II Peter, emphasis is placed on God's great gifts to mankind, the coming of the Lord with power, upon prophecy rightly understood. It warns against false teachers and prophets, and predicts that the Lord's day will come suddenly and with fire. As reference is made to Paul's teachings and to their wicked perversion, some scholars are convinced that it was written long after Peter's martyrdom. Whatever one may conclude regarding its authorship, the admission of this Epistle into the canon should add great strength and impetus to Christian faith.

The actual authorship of the Epistle of James is also a question in dispute. Its salutation, "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," does not aid in indentifying the author, as James was a common name among the Jews. It was long held that James, the author, was a brother of Jesus. Opponents of this conclusion ask, Why are there not, then, more personal references to the

Founder of Christianity? — a pertinent question. They also point to the contents as relating to conditions which existed at the end of the first century, rather than at 62 A.D., the date of the passing of James, the Lord's brother, or at an earlier date. Despite these difficulties, some of the most eminent scholars have, after long research, been fully convinced that it was written by the brother of Jesus, and consequently they assign to it the earlier date.

The Epistle of James is unique in style. It is a sermon rather than a letter, and in this particular seems to parallel the Sermon on the Mount. Professor Goodspeed finds much of modernity in this Epistle. In its interest in democracy, philanthropy, and racial justice, he finds a parallel to pronouncements of our own times. And, says he, "The preacher's simplicity and directness, his impatience with cant and sham, and his satirical skill in exposing them, his noble advocacy of the rights of labor and his clear perception of the sterling Christian virtues that were to win the world, justify the place of honor his sermon has in the New Testament" ("Story of the New Testament," p. 104).

Surely such a message cannot fail to inspire the reader of today, as well as of the long ago, to the desire for more faithful service, for more spiritual strength and alertness to duty, in order to meet the demands of true Christianity. James gives especial emphasis to the need for faith, and the practical value of works. This theme of the Epistle has led some commentators to compare it to the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

Regarding the authorship of the three Johannine letters, there is less controversy. In fact, evidence is so complete that scholars generally accept John, the author of the Fourth Gospel, as the writer of the three Epistles. Internal evidence is strong as to the oneness of authorship. Yet, notwithstanding this, it was not until the fourth century that the second and third letters were generally

accepted as worthy of a place in the Canon of New Testament literature. The Epistles grew out of a condition which had developed among the groups of early Christians. Extravagant teaching had found its way into the early church, with the result that many were turning away from the simple messages of Jesus. These false prophets declared that the Messiah had not come in the flesh. By denying the generally accepted doctrine that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," they believed they were denying materiality, and in consequence were better able to progress spiritually.

John assails these false teachers as the antichrist, and holds their assumed superiority as destructive of true Christian doctrine. But John compliments them by dealing most seriously with them; and he brings to bear all his power of expression, his knowledge of events, and spiritual enlightenment, in order to make his refutation worthy and effective.

In the first Epistle — which is general, and scarcely a letter at all — John makes clear that religious experience to be genuine must result in transformation of the individual. He must become loving and charitable. And he proves that the new teachings are false because of their failure to produce such results. He makes clear that denial of the Incarnation and of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God leads to a false Christianity.

The need for love one to another is based upon the premise that God is love. No more appealing message — the value of true love — is found in the entire New Testament. Its message has brought lasting peace to many a troubled heart. Its date is uncertain. Opinions regarding it range from 70 to 95 A.D.

The brief second letter is addressed by "the elder unto the elect lady and her children." Many have held the "lady" to be a symbol for the Church. But other enlightened commentators believe it was a private letter

addressed to a friend for whom and her family he felt concerned as to their Christian welfare. He commends their righteous living, and stresses the need of simple fidelity to the true teachings. He explains the brevity of the letter by the hope of a personal visit, when he may speak his mind face to face with them.

The third letter, also personal, is addressed to his friend, Gaius. He commends the faithful service of Gaius to the brethren, but criticizes Diotrephes, who apparently has undertaken to spread false doctrines. One Demetrius, the Elder introduces to Gaius, apparently with the hope that he will withstand the false teachings of Diotrephes until John himself reaches the church. Then will he explain fully to Gaius what he has in his heart.

What of Jude? Although in the introduction to this brief letter its authorship is ascribed to "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James," scholars have held divided opinions as to the identity of the writer. After examination of the arguments, it is reasonable to conclude, however, that Jude, a devout Christian and probably a brother of James, and therefore of Jesus, is the author.

The message is one of exhortation to rise against certain types of sin which had become prevalent among some who called themselves Christians. The letter is brief but vehement. The author quotes from two apocryphal books, Enoch and the Assumption of Moses, as though these writings were authoritative and canonical. He indicates that there must be discrimination, however, in dealing with the diverse types of evil. Jude's vocabulary has been characterized as ambitious, leaning toward the classical. His style, however, is not in conformity with his choice of words. The closing verses in beautiful language glorify God our Saviour for His "majesty, dominion, and power."

Growth and Canon of New Testament

THE story of the writing of the New Testament books so far as it is known and the selection of its Canon is of intense interest. As we read the gospel story in a de luxe copy of the Authorized Version, plainly printed and beautifully bound, with its pages illumined, perhaps, by many excellent pictures, we rarely turn our thought to the question of its origin and development, of the sacrifice and devotion which produced it. Yet the more we know of the circumstances of its production, of the lives of the early Christians out of whose inspirations and experiences it came, the greater value shall we accord to its message.

For a considerable period subsequent to the crucifixion and resurrection, the immediate disciples of Jesus were expectant of his return. As the years passed without the fulfillment of their hopes, his teachings were carried abroad orally by certain converts, especially by impetuous Peter and energetic Paul. The young blades springing from the seeds of Christian doctrine planted by these enterprising disciples, sometimes became choked with weeds and special care was necessary to their proper growth. Then it was that the Apostle, perhaps sitting at his tent-making in Corinth, or Ephesus, wrote letters of warning, of encouragement, of exhortation to those whom he had inspired in various cities. In these letters were the beginnings of Christian literature.

During these years, little thought, it seems, was given to the necessity of recording the words of the Master,

and of writing the history of his life and works. Were there not present those who had received the messages direct from his lips? Could not Peter, upon whom the Lord had looked in the judgment hall of Caiaphas, repeat to them the words of the Master as they fell from his lips?

Could not Thomas, he of doubtful mind, tell them of the wounded hands and side? Could not John recite for them at any time, again and again, all that was said at that memorable meal in the upper chamber? Had they not living witnesses of the Lord's works?

But as their Lord did not return, it must have gradually dawned upon the devoted band that something should be done to record permanently the teachings of the Master and the story of his life. We have seen how and by whom it was done, and something of the circumstances under which the books were written. How the books of the New Testament came to be accepted in the canon — that is, as the authorized and authoritative group — involves another story.

It seems likely that the early writers conceived not of a New Testament, a new Bible. The Old Testament was to them the sacred book; for had not Jesus taught from its pages? Were not his teachings frequently based upon its holy words? However, as the volume of literature presenting the teachings of Jesus and their application to human experience increased, quite naturally a variety of opinions sprang up, some sharply conflicting, as to what his teachings actually were, and as to their significance.

Consequently, as time went on, there arose the necessity for choosing between these various versions of Christian teaching. Some of the books, especially the four Gospels, were accepted from early times as authoritative and authentic. Their very contents carried conviction as

to their authenticity. Similarly, Paul's letters were generally accepted.

Sometimes, leaders of the churches — bishops, if you please — foregathered and discussed the various problems relative to the growing literature. What was authoritative? Which writings most perfectly set forth the letter and spirit of Christianity as based upon Jesus' teachings? Certain books were accepted; others were discarded. And so the process of selection went on, sometimes with unanimity of choice; sometimes with sharp disagreement. As a result, for a long time the groups of books used in different churches varied.

Just when the process of authorization began, no one knows. Paul, writing to Timothy, urged him to "guard the deposit." Paul twice asked that his letters be read in the churches to which they were sent, as he was convinced they came from the Lord. The author of II Peter also refers to the writings of Paul "as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles . . . which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures" (3:15, 16).

It was probably out of the necessity of combating false doctrine that the Canon began to take definite shape. Of the early defenders of the true doctrine — among them Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias — Justin Martyr stands out as the author of two documents, "Apologies" and "A Dialogue with Trypho." He, first of all, it appears, placed the New Testament writings on a level in importance with the Old Testament. He speaks of "memoirs of the Apostles called Gospels" as being read in the churches, together with the Prophets. Prof. Kir-sopp Lake mentions this public reading as the first step in the actual formation of the New Testament Canon.

Justin Martyr recognized and quoted from many of

the books now in the Canon. Then followed Irenaeus, pupil of Polycarp, a disciple of John the Apostle. He found the authority for his writings in the same books, which he regarded as comparable in authority with the Old Testament. He made a large number of quotations from Paul's letters. Likewise, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian of Carthage made use of the new writings in connection with the Old Testament. Conviction as to the authorship of these writings, and frequent use in combating the numerous false doctrines which had sprung up, led to their designation as the "New Testament."

The work of Origen as a defender of the doctrine did much toward crystallizing the Canon and to the formation and designation of the chosen books. Near the close of the second century, a list of New Testament books almost complete was compiled, supposedly by Hippolytus. This list was discovered by Muratori, the librarian of Milan, in 1740, and consequently is known as the Muratorian fragment, because the list of books of the Christian Canon appearing there is not quite complete. Matthew, Hebrews, the Epistles of Peter and James, and two others are wanting. Professor Lake states that by the close of the second century the Canon of the New Testament was fairly established, "with a fourfold Gospel, a collection of Pauline Epistles, and a less clearly defined book of other Apostolic writings, as to which local opinion varied."

After Origen came another witness, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, who wrote a "Church History." He included in his list of authoritative books I and II Peter and Revelation, James, Jude, and II and III John. But it was Athanasius, who in the fourth century, in a pastoral letter named the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, as we now have them. He terms them the "Wells of Salva-

tion," and he warns against either adding to or taking away from the number.

Church councils, gathered at Hippo in 393, and at Carthage in 397, A.D., set the stamp of approval upon the twenty-seven, as named by Athanasius. Augustine had an important part in the final determination of the Canon as constituting "the charter of the Christian faith." Of the noncanonical writings of the early centuries, several are worthy of careful consideration, and will be given due attention. It is true, however, that Christendom in general accepts and applauds the list of books appearing in our New Testament, as containing the essentials of Christian doctrine, together with an acceptable story of the life of the Founder.

XXII

Early Versions and Apocrypha

IN JESUS' time, two Bibles were in common use. One was the Alexandrian Septuagint, known as the LXX, which contained the Old Testament books, as we have them, and also the Apocrypha. This Bible was written in Greek. The other was the Palestinian collection in Hebrew, the Bible in common use in the synagogues of the first century.

The Old Testament Canon was still without official sanction, as final approval came at Jamnia in 90 A.D. It is certain from his frequent references to it, that Jesus was thoroughly familiar with the Bible of the Hebrews. In the Gospels there are recorded sixty-one direct quotations by him from this Bible, forty-three allusions to Old Testament passages, and fourteen references to events recorded in this Bible. His quotations are taken from nineteen of the thirty-nine books, the most numerous quotations being from Isaiah and Psalms.

In the early days of Christianity, while the Canon of the New Testament was still in a formative state, the Old Testament alone was used in church services. Gradually the letters of Paul came to be read, and gradually also the Gospels were introduced into the services. Thus the use of the Scriptures grew, until all the books we now have were included in the authorized Bible.

As with the determination of the Canon of the Old Testament, so with the New, there were apocryphal books to be considered, none of them generally regarded

as approaching in importance and authority those that found their way into the Canon.

The chief value of these books has sometimes been considered as historical and literary rather than doctrinal. When carefully examined, however, it will be found that they cannot be trusted to convey either true doctrine or reliable history. Several of these were termed Gospels, among them, "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," "The Gospel according to the Egyptians," and "The Gospel of Peter."

Certain of these seem to have been written to exploit some unusual conception of the personality of Jesus. Among such were "The Gospel of Thomas," "The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles," and "The Gospel of Philip." The Apostles obviously were not the authors of these writings, but their names were attached by the writers, whoever they were, to give emphasis to the messages. Thus they fell into the group of religious literature termed "Pseudepigrapha."

In addition to the above were several books purporting to reveal details of the life of Jesus not found elsewhere, an effort that has persisted until the present day. Among these writings were "The Gospel of the Childhood," "The Nativity of Mary," "The Book of James or Protevangelium," "The History of Joseph," "The Departure of Mary," "The Gospel of Nicodemus," and a dozen others.

Under the general title of Epistles were Epistles of Ignatius, of Barnabas, of Clement, of Polycarp, etc., probably in some cases not written by the eminent person whose name appears as the author. Under the heading of Acts were the Acts of Peter, of Andrew, of John, and the "Acts of Paul and Thekla" (a woman martyr of Iconium). The latter was the best known of all.

Classed as Revelation were the "Apocalypse of Peter,"

the "Sibylline Oracles," and the "Shepherd of Hermas." The last named recorded a series of visions by a Christian prophet of Rome, who chose to dress in the rough garments of a shepherd. These are but a few from a mass of writings purporting to deal with actual happenings but usually regarded as quite unreliable.

While it may be said of the apocryphal books in general that they were unimportant, three of them were prized by the early Church as possessing much of value, both historically and spiritually: "Shepherd of Hermas" and the Epistles of Barnabas and Clement.

So persistent was the use of several of these books, that not until the end of the fourth century were they dropped from the accepted list, when the Canon of the New Testament became actually fixed.

In this unsettled condition, the Bibles which were in common use until the end of the fourth century varied considerably as to content. The Bible of the Western Church did not contain Hebrews; the Bible of the Eastern Church rejected Revelation; while the Syrian Bible omitted Peter, Jude and Revelation. At the Council of Carthage, agreement was reached; and the Bible, except as to the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, became static as to its content. It appears that Jerome, because of his translation termed the Vulgate, which contained the apocryphal writings, had much to do in the final determination of the books of our present Bible.

During the succeeding centuries, even to the Middle Ages, the Bibles commonly used in Christian churches were: The Old Latin Bible of the second century; the Vulgate, containing the books of our own Bible and the Apocrypha; and the Syriac, having but twenty-two books in the New Testament. The books omitted in this version were II Peter, II and III John, Jude and Revelation. There was also the Ethiopic Bible, with apocryphal

writings, making thirty-five books in the New Testament.

As we have learned, the early Jewish Bible was in the Hebrew tongue. The Septuagint version was written in Greek, while the Old Latin and Jerome's Vulgate were in the Latin language. There followed, in succeeding centuries, translations in Gothic, the Armenian, made for that people in Asia Minor, and the Coptic version in the eighth century. These versions are helpful to modern scholars in comparative studies of the texts. Several of them, especially the Syriac and Old Latin, are older than many of the Greek manuscripts.

As the centuries passed, these older versions were outmoded because of the growing emphasis which the Roman Catholic Church put upon Jerome's Latin translation. The inevitable result was quite naturally that the use of the Bible was limited to the learned class. The common people had little knowledge of it; and it is said that even scholars came to lose interest in the questions of origin, canonicity or authorship of the Sacred Scriptures. The languages of the early Bibles, Hebrew and Greek, were no longer of interest. So marked did this lack of interest become that when, after the Renaissance, Cardinal Ximenes published his Polyglot edition with the Latin Vulgate between the Greek and Hebrew versions of the Old Testament, he stated in his preface that it was "like Jesus between two thieves."

This withholding of the Bible from common use quite naturally led to an assumption of power on the part of the Church. The doctrine grew that the Bible derived its authority from the Roman Catholic Church — a plain reversal of the position of the early Church. Because of belief in the divine, and therefore the infallible authority of the Church, it was held that the Church became the sponsor of inspiration and the guardian of interpretation

of what is divine and authoritative. This was the established view of the Church.

It was inevitable under this regime that the people should lose contact with the Bible. The Church assumed all authority regarding it. It was not the Church, however, that made the decision regarding the books of the Bible. The Canon had been adopted by councils of religionists, bishops and others. The Church, meantime, had, tacitly at least, accepted the books of Jerome's Vulgate as the authoritative list.

This condition continued until the challenge by the Reformation of the authority of the Church over the Sacred Scriptures. Then in 1546, was called the Council of Trent, and for the first time in Christian history the Roman Catholic Church put its official stamp of approval upon the Canon of the Bible, that is, the sixty-six books of our Authorized Version, plus the eleven books of the Apocrypha.

Accompanying the official decree was a statement of anathema upon all who should refuse to receive these books "as they have been wont to be read in the Church, and as they are contained in the Old Vulgate Latin edition."

Thus the Roman Catholic Church, so far as its authority extended, determined at last what the Bible should be. The Church made its Bible. A Roman Catholic writer is quoted by Booth, as follows: "The Catholic Church which produced the Bible is the only genuinely authorized interpreter thereof. The Catholic Church got along without the Bible for nearly 400 years, it could get along again if every book of the Bible were blotted from the entire world" ("Background of the Bible," pp. 236-7).

Now that the canon of the New Testament has been considered, it seems of interest to survey its history, to learn something of the various versions which developed

before the time of Gutenberg. One of the most important of the early versions, the Vulgate, was the work of Jerome (Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus), secretary to Damasus, Bishop at Rome between 366 and 384 A.D.

Because of the multiplicity of texts that had developed, the Bishop saw the need of clarifying and unifying the substance of the New Testament. Accordingly, he commissioned Jerome, his secretary, to undertake the task. From the old texts, Jerome, with as little change as possible, produced in Latin the version known to us as the Vulgate, arranging the books in the order now familiar in the New Testament.

The translation and revision were carefully made. Later he also took in hand the overhauling of the Old Testament, and the result was the Bible which has been widely used and still is the basis of the accepted version, the Rheims-Douai, of the Roman Catholic Church.

The reception of Jerome's translation, however, was not immediate, for many churches continued to use the Old Latin version made in the second century. No doubt personal opinions and ambitions entered into the situation, for the road of the religious reformer has never been an easy one. It was not until the ninth century that the Vulgate was wholly regarded as authoritative; and not, as we have seen, until the Council of Trent, in 1546, was it adopted as the standard Bible for the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. The term "Vulgate" is derived from the Latin, "vulgata," signifying "common."

Even earlier than Jerome's translation was a version brought out by an Assyrian Christian, Tatian by name. The fact that the four Gospels contained much of repetitive statement so impressed Tatian that during the latter part of the third century he determined to remedy the situation by combining the Gospel story into a single narrative.

Accordingly, taking a Greek text of the New Testament widely used at that period, he proceeded to do what a modern journalist often does. By the liberal use of "paste pot and scissors," he eliminated and rearranged the contents of the four Gospels into a single connective story. That is, he made of the four books one, known as the "Diatessaron." There is evidence that his version was translated into Latin.

Tatian later in his native Assyria translated his Greek version into Syriac, the language of the Euphrates Valley; and this version was commonly used in the churches of that region. The Syriac was one of the Semitic group of languages, closely resembling the Aramaic, but not identical with it. The original manuscript has disappeared, but Tatian's version continued to be used until the early part of the fifth century.

Several authors in modern times have brought out versions of the four Gospels in English, after the style of the Diatessaron, and they serve a useful purpose in intensive study of the Gospel narrative. Prof. Alexander Souter says that the "original Greek of Tatian's book is a more desirable possession for the textual critic of the Gospels than almost anything else yet discovered."

Syrian scholars were diligent in producing versions of the Bible in their own language. Four of these versions, including the Diatessaron, are known to scholars. In 1842 fragments of a Syrian manuscript containing part of a Gospel were discovered in the Nitrian Desert in Egypt. When translated, it was found to have been produced in the fifth century, but reproduced from a text actually belonging to the second century.

In 1892 two English ladies found in the Monastery of St. Catherine, on Mt. Sinai, a manuscript of the four Gospels in Syriac, regarded as the oldest translation ever made into that language. It is assigned to the second cen-

ture and is a palimpsest, that is, it was inscribed on a parchment from which other writings had been erased. It is now preserved in the Greek Orthodox Monastery at Sinai.

The oldest and by far the best known of the Syriac versions is the Peshitto, a word signifying "simple" or "easily understood." Some scholars contend that the Old Testament portion of the version was made prior to the beginning of the Christian era. Others locate it in its entirety toward the end of the second century; while many reliable commentators hold that it was directly or indirectly the work of Rabbulas, Bishop of Edessa from 411 to 435 A.D.

About the date of this Syriac version has arisen much discussion. In fact, it has been a veritable storm center among Biblical scholars. The question has been whether it was an original manuscript of the second century, a reproduction of a version of that period, or a revision under the direction of Bishop Rabbulas of an older manuscript to bring it into line with Greek versions of his time. It appears that the best scholarship at present inclines toward the last named as the most likely situation.

Through the centuries, the Peshitto has been the standard for the Assyrian churches. Second and Third John, Second Peter, Jude, and the Apocalypse are wanting in this version. This Syriac version of the Old Testament, sometimes called the Syriac Vulgate, was translated from the Hebrew text and contained the same number of books, twenty-two. Whatever period is assigned to the Peshitto, as a whole, it has served a valuable purpose in affording an accurate, faithful, and literal text of the early Bible.

The Syrian scholars, with characteristic energy, refused to rest with the Peshitto as the final version, although it was accepted as both standard and official.

Early in the sixth century, the Bishop of Mabug directed the making of even a more literal translation of the New Testament, the work being actually done by his secretary, one Polycarp. It is of interest that of this translation only the books wanting in the Peshitto remain. This is known as the Philoxenian version. A revision of this version, made by Harkel in the seventh century, survives and is almost complete.

The purpose of Harkel's translation was to make of the Philoxenian a version still more literal. Its use seems to be more practical for the textual critic than for the general scholar. Its accuracy is such as to make plain the meaning of the original Greek. This effort at literalism is paralleled in our own time by the recent translation by Professor Torrey of Yale University of the four Gospels from the Greek, after having constructed the background in Aramaic.

Still another version of the Scriptures, known as the Palestinian, is written in a Syriac dialect closely resembling the Aramaic, the language of Jesus. No complete book of this version remains. In it, Matthew XXVII: 17 reads "Jesus Barabbas," probably the correct reading, attested by several authorities, including Origen.

XXIII

The Bible Comes to Britain

OF THE half dozen translations of the Bible made during the first five centuries of the Christian era, the most important, when judged from the extent of its use, was the Latin Version, the Vulgate. As the church in Rome grew in power and influence, the Latin Bible grew in popularity. Jerome's work was far-reaching as a vehicle for spreading the teachings of Christianity.

While Christianity reached the shores of Britain some time during the second century of the Christian era, its feeble beginnings were submerged temporarily by the tide of heathen Saxons driving toward the West.

In 563, St. Columba, with twelve monks, founded a monastery on the Island of Iona. Thirty-four years later, Augustine, emissary of Pope Gregory of Rome, landed in Kent and established a missionary movement which centered at Canterbury. The two movements, the one in the northwest, the other in the southeast, differed greatly in their presentation of Christianity, and ultimately came to grips in Northumberland, with the result that the movement begun by Augustine finally prevailed. The gentle piety of the Columban church was overwhelmed by the formalism of the Roman church.

While the teachings of Christianity were brought to Britain's shores by the earlier missionaries probably in manuscript form, the later efforts of Columba and Augustine were mainly responsible for the coming of the Bible in its Latin or Vulgate version. As this was in a

language unfamiliar to the Saxon inhabitants no less than to the native Britons, there arose among the common people an irrepressible desire for the Scriptures in their own tongue.

As always follows when a righteous desire becomes sufficiently general, avenues were opened for the fulfilling of their hope, narrow to be sure at first, but broadening as the desire grew, until centuries later a Bible in the English tongue appeared.

A persistent tradition has it that more than twelve centuries ago (about 670 A.D.), to a poor cowherd, Caedmon by name, yearning for a knowledge of higher things, came a vision in which a voice admonished him to sing of "the first beginning of created things." Although the vision vanished, he became, as he believed, divinely possessed of the power of poetic expression. The result was a form of religious poetry which was in fact the fountain of English literature. From this inspired beginning Britain traces her first Bible in the English tongue, which, however, did not appear until centuries later. Caedmon's work may not be described as a Bible translation, yet it gave to the humble people much of the substance of the Scriptures.

As the Whitby cowherd passed from the scene, early in the eighth century the Bishop of Sherborne became the first to translate the Psalms of David into the Anglo-Saxon speech; and contemporaneously another bishop, Egbert, produced a translation of the Gospels. A copy of this is among the priceless treasures of the British Museum.

Another name indissolubly associated with the early development of the English Bible is that of the Venerable Bede (674-735). Of his labors in translating the New Testament a touching story has come down to us.

Bede was by far the greatest scholar of his day in

Britain. To him came students from far and near to profit by his instruction. His "Ecclesiastical History" is the chief source book of early English history. He wrote on many other subjects, including medicine, astronomy, and languages, but religion was his favorite theme. He wrote many sermons on the Scriptures, and finally undertook the translation of the Fourth Gospel. And tradition states that as he finished dictating the last sentence of the Gospel, he passed from earth.

The next to undertake the translation of the Bible was no less a personage than King Alfred the Great. His wish, as it is quoted, was that "all the freeborn youth of his kingdom should employ themselves on nothing till they could first read well the English Scripture." Alfred's intense love for the Bible had no more impressive expression than in his "Alfred's Dooms," found in the beginnings of his "Laws of England." It reads thus: "The dooms which the Almighty Himself spake to Moses, and gave him to keep, and after our Saviour Christ came to earth, He said He came not to break or forbid, but to keep them."

The Ten Commandments were translated, or caused to be translated, by Alfred into the Anglo-Saxon tongue in terms which now seem quite strange and unnatural. The familiar passage, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," reads thus in his quaint translation, "Ic eam Drihten thy God. Ic the sit gelaedde of Aegypta londe and of heora theowdome" ("How We Got Our Bible," p. 52). Alfred undertook the translation of other parts of the Bible, among them the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms, and the Gospels, but did not complete his task of translating the whole book.

In the tenth and early eleventh centuries, other versions of the Gospels came forth, mostly for the West

Saxon people. At the end of the tenth century, Abbott Ælfric translated the Pentateuch into Anglo-Saxon; also Joshua, Judges, Esther, Job, part of Kings, Judith and Maccabees. The reason he gave for dealing so largely with the warlike portion of the history of the Hebrews was that he hoped thereby to stir a militant spirit in the people against the marauding Danes — surely an unusual use of the Holy Scriptures.

It is notable that all of these efforts to provide Anglo-Saxon versions of the Bible for the people of England were undertaken by individuals; in no case by the Church. Also it should be recalled that at this period the Scriptures were recorded only in the form of manuscripts. To be sure, thousands of these were produced by diligent monks, working with great skill and meticulous care.

Many of these manuscripts exist today, notable for the beauty of their illumination in many colors and the print-like nicety of the letters of the text. They are veritable works of art, bespeaking, as do the great Christian cathedrals of the Middle Ages, a devotion and consecration to the Christian ideals which found expression in a willingness to undertake tasks involving a great outlay of skill, combined with unlimited patience. The Christian spirit today finds expression in bringing to the heart of humanity the import of Jesus' teachings.

Of the early efforts to provide in the Saxon language essential portions of the Bible, but few traces remain. The conquering Danes destroyed much of the evidence, and now most of the remainder has disappeared. But enough fragments are preserved to acquaint us with the character of the beginnings which finally produced a version of the Scriptures adequate to meet the needs of the time.

The change in language from that of King Alfred to

the present-day English may be seen in this rendition of the Lord's Prayer:

*Uren Fader dhis art in heofnas,
Sic gehalged dhin noma,
To cymedh dhin ric,
Sic dhin uuilla sue is in heofnas and in eardho,
Vren blaf ofer uuirthe sel vs to daeg,
And forgef us scylda urna,
Sue uue forgefan sculdgun vrum,
And no inleadh vridk in costmng al gefrig vrich from
ifle.*

The coming of the Normans wrought another change in the language of the people. But as a people's tongue does not change quickly, a long time passed before the enriched English language appeared, improved and rendered vastly more elastic by the inroads of both Saxon and French. The outcome of these infiltrations was what is known as "Old English," an intermediate stage, it seems, between the ancient language of Britain and the language of Shakespeare and Milton. These engraftments quite naturally delayed any attempt to popularize the Scriptures. For while the learned might easily and quickly assimilate new forms of speech, the common people were far behind in linguistic accomplishments.

However, in 1215, a monk of the Augustine order, Orm by name, began to translate a portion of the Scriptures into the new dialect. His work, called the "Ormulum," is a metrical translation of portions of the Gospels and the book of Acts, some twenty thousand lines in all, the original manuscript of which is now preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is in fact a paraphrase of the Gospels with a short allegorical exposition. As to the reason for his work Orm said: "If any one wishes to

know why I have done this deed, I have done it so that all young Christian folk may depend upon the Gospel only, and may follow with all their might its holy teaching in thought, and word, and deed."

There were few other attempts to render the Scriptures into English until the middle of the fourteenth century. A noteworthy effort was that of William of Shoreham, who, about 1320, translated the Psalter into prose. Ten years later Richard Rolle, known as the "Hermit of Hampole," also translated the Psalms into the new vernacular. Both of these churchmen used the Vulgate version as their original.

The attitude of the Church itself toward the problem of giving an English Bible to the people is well illustrated by the fact that these personal efforts alone were made during the long period between the Norman conquest and the middle of the fourteenth century. To be sure, the Church was strenuous in its efforts to encourage people in the worship of God as worship was understood; but it seems something of an anomaly that religious teaching should have been carried on with a Bible written in Latin, a language which the people did not know.

The times were ready for an upheaval, and it came in the person of John Wycliffe. The black plagues that swept the country three times in twenty years brought with terrible emphasis the need for some stabilizing influence. These experiences, coupled with the fact that the nation was learning its unity, stressed the need for a speech that could be called "English" and understood by the masses.

It was at this time of want that Wycliffe appeared on the scene. He was born about 1320 and lived to the age of sixty-four. He has been called "the last of the Schoolmen and the first of the Reformers." He has also been termed "the Morning Star of the Reformation" because

he began the effective resistance to the methods of the Church at Rome, which culminated in the great change in the polity of the Church, brought to a head a century later by Martin Luther.

Wycliffe was educated at Oxford and became Master of Balliol College. Imbued with an irresistible desire to bring the teachings of Christianity more effectually to the common people, he left his work at Oxford to take up the task of a reformer. He saw that the most potent weapon with which to combat the evils which had sprung up in the Church was a translation of the Bible into the common tongue of the day. He set himself to the great task with a zeal born of a fervent desire to make accessible the teachings of the Founder of Christianity to all ready to receive and profit by them. With the Vulgate as the basis of his work, he completed the translation of the New Testament by 1380; and four years later the translation of the Old Testament was finished. This was the first rendition of the entire Bible into the English language.

It is probable that Wycliffe did only a portion of the work himself. His extremely busy life as evangelist, teacher, and missionary compelled him to seek the assistance of Nicholas of Hereford, who it is believed did most of the work of translating the Old Testament.

Scholars claim that close study of the original manuscript readily discloses, because of different styles in language, what portions were done by Wycliffe himself and what by his helper. Wycliffe used the plain speech of the common people, while the language of Nicholas was often stilted and literal, although scholarly and accurate.

Wycliffe's Bible did much to unify and give form to the English language. The Norman-French thereafter gave way before the new and vigorous tongue of which the Wycliffe Bible was the outstanding example.

As a reformer, Wycliffe won many converts known as

“Lollards” who spread the use of his Bible throughout the land. Both he and his followers suffered great opposition, even persecution, from the authorities of the Church. Wycliffe was regarded as the instrument of the evil one, and a bill was introduced in Parliament forbidding the use of the English Bible.

One orthodox verdict issued against him characterizes him as “The Church’s enemy, people’s confusion, heretic’s idol, hypocrite’s mirror, schism’s broacher, hatred’s sower, etc.,” with more of the same tenor, revealing the depth of feeling against one who dared to denounce in the methods of the Church what he regarded as serious subversion of true Christianity. Wycliffe was, of course, excommunicated, and efforts were made to nullify and cut off his labors at Oxford where he continued to lecture. But, nothing daunted, he went on with his work of reform until his passing in 1384.

Keen scholars among his followers, the Lollards, found many defects in his translations, so many in fact that a revision became necessary. The work was undertaken by one John Purvey, who in the introduction to the work describes himself as “a simple creature”; his revision was so well done, however, that in a few years it supplanted the original Wycliffe’s version almost completely.

As the art of printing had not then (1388) been invented, only hand-written manuscripts were produced. These were expensive, a single copy having sold for \$150 — at that period a large sum. Foxe relates that so greatly prized was this first English version of the Bible that a load of hay was given in exchange for the use of a manuscript for a single day. Of the one hundred seventy manuscripts now extant, thirty-three are of Wycliffe’s translation, fifteen of the Old Testament, eighteen of the New. The rest are Purvey’s revision. This version of Wycliffe’s Bible has chapters but no verse divisions. The latter were not introduced until 1560.

A fair example of the English of that day may be found in Wycliffe's translation of the Lord's Prayer, which reads as follows: "*Oure fadir that art in heueves, halwid be thi name, thi kingdom comme to, be thi wille done as in heuen so in erthe; gif to us this day oure breed ouer other substance; and forgeue to us our dettis as we forgeue to oure dettours, and leede us not in to temptacioun but delyuere us fro yuel*" (see "Robinson," p. 132).

During the century following the passing of Wycliffe from the scene, important events occurred, events which have had a tremendous impact upon the course of civilization. Chief among these was the general distribution of the Holy Scriptures. Up to this time the only copies of the Bible in any language were in the form of manuscripts, as we have seen, wrought, only with the most meticulous care and through prolonged labor. Monks in secluded cells, women in the retirement of their homes, were engaged in transcribing the Holy Scriptures to the end that knowledge of God might become more general.

A single copy of Wycliffe's Bible took the copyists nearly a year to prepare! In consequence, while the building of the magnificent cathedrals of England went on apace, the work of disseminating the Scriptures was slow, laborious, and costly. But necessity promotes invention; and during the fifteenth century an event occurred that has so changed the reproduction of the written word that a complete New Testament is now published and sold for two cents. This has resulted from the invention of the art of printing.

An appealing story is told of this occurrence. A boy in the German town of Mainz, Johann Gensfleisch by name, was helping his mother at her task of preparing parchment for writers. One day he had been amusing himself by cutting his initials out of the bark of a tree,

which afterward he spread on a board. Accidentally he dropped a letter into a pot of purple dye used by his mother, and upon taking it out and placing it upon a white parchment, he found the imprint of the letter. From this casual happening he discovered the fundamental of printing and began to pursue his findings.

Years afterward Gutenberg (he had taken meantime the name of his mother in preference to the paternal Gensfleisch, which means goose-flesh) was recognized as a pioneer in the use of movable type. It is believed that the first complete book ever printed — in Europe, at least — was the Latin Bible, published at Mainz in 1456.

Almost at the same time, the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Moslems sent hosts of Greek scholars to the west of Europe, and the great "Renaissance" was on, a movement which did much to revive interest in classic learning, especially in the Hebrew and Greek languages and literature, and to liberalize and broaden the minds of men. The Dark Ages, the period of darkness, superstition and bigotry, was drawing to a close.

Up to this time translations of the Bible into English had been made from Latin manuscripts, which in turn had been translated from earlier versions. Hebrew and Greek had fallen into disuse. The classics were no longer of interest even to the scholars of the time.

Now with the Renaissance came a revival of interest in ancient culture, and grammars were published in these tongues. Thus, study of the Bible in the original languages was made possible, and scholars took advantage of the opportunity. Then Erasmus, the greatest Greek scholar of his time, came from Holland to teach theology and Greek at Cambridge. Seeing the dire need of liberation on the part of the people from mental bondage, he collated many old manuscripts of the Bible and in 1516 gave to the world its first printed Greek Testament.

While his collation of the Greek Testament, together with its translation into Latin, was not made from the most ancient manuscripts, and lacked something in accuracy, his work was of great value in its liberating influence and in heading up a movement which ultimately led to the Reformation.

The stage was set for the next great step in the development. When the printing press had been invented; when the Renaissance had again stirred public interest in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew with their early versions of the Bible, came upon the scene Erasmus and his Greek Testament. Yet still wanting was a potent character to lead the next forward movement in giving the Bible to the people. But as in all crises in human affairs, the need brought the man in the person of William Tyndale, born in 1483, shortly after the birth of Martin Luther.

Tyndale, a scholar by nature, easily took honors at Oxford, and soon after moved to Cambridge where Erasmus had been a teacher. Coming in contact with the clergy of the day, he was deeply impressed by their ignorance and lack of culture. All too often he found them coarse, rude men. It is said that of three hundred eight clergymen in one diocese, forty did not know the Lord's Prayer, and one hundred sixty-eight were quite ignorant of the Ten Commandments.

When encountering one of these ignorant churchmen, he one day made the traditional promise, "If God spareth my life, I will make the boy that driveth the plough to know more Scripture than thou dost." To make good his promise, he set himself to translate the Bible.

At Cambridge, Tyndale found Erasmus' Greek Testament. And there is reason to believe that from it he derived his plan of a Bible translated from the original, and in language simple enough to be understood by the ploughboy. Where to carry on the work was a question.

The Bishop of London, to whom he had applied for domicile while engaged with this task, told him frankly there was no room for him in the episcopal mansion. Nothing daunted, Tyndale found refuge in the house of a merchant, Monmouth by name, located near the Tower. Here he worked for a year on his translation.

Quite naturally, it seems, in his great ministry, Tyndale looked for and expected support from the Church and the clergy. But his hopes were unrealized. The disturbance in the Church in Germany had its repercussions in England. Luther had nailed his theses to the church door at Wittenberg and burned the Papal bull. Sharp divisions arose among both clergy and laymen in England as well as in Germany. It was a time of revolution in the polity and doctrine of the Church. Finding little chance of completing his work in England because of growing opposition, hastily, in 1524, he left his country — forever as it eventuated — and sought and found among the liberated minds of Germany the opportunity to complete the work to which he had set his whole heart.

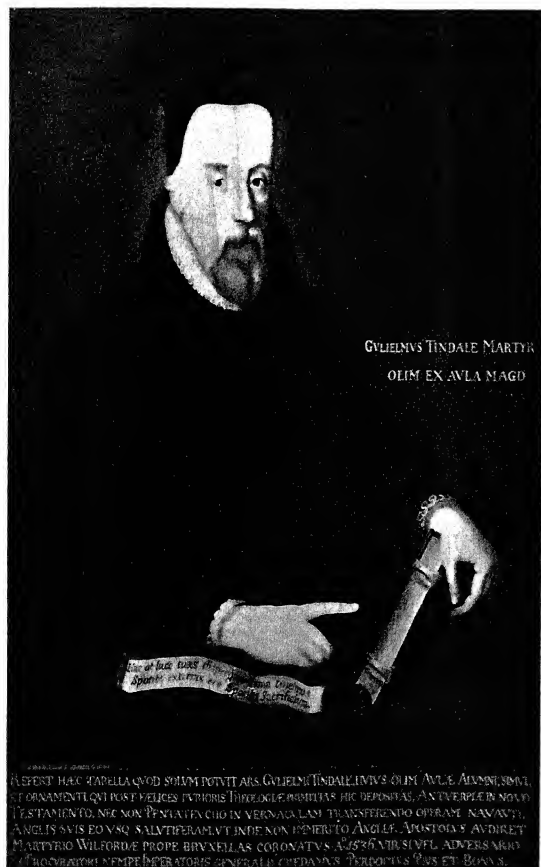
But his troubles were not over. Finding resistance at Hamburg, where he first resided, he went to Cologne. There his translation of the New Testament was placed in the hands of the printer. But again threatened, he fled with some printed sheets to Worms, where, in 1525, he triumphantly published his New Testament, the first Scripture printed in the English language. Copies sent to England were seized and burned. Both Church and State rose against it. But despite all this opposition, some fifteen thousand copies were smuggled in and circulated. At last the printed Word reached the people in a language they could understand. The ploughboy was supplied with the Word of God in his own tongue. The masses were being liberated from the darkness of mental bondage.

XXIV

The Bible Wins

IN THESE days when the rights of all to exercise freedom of conscience in modes of worship are so generally recognized, it is difficult to grasp the situation which confronted Tyndale. Harassed on all sides in England, obliged to flee his own country, driven from city to city on the Continent, and at last strangled and burned, if not with the connivance of Church and State, at least with no effort on their part to release him, he stands today a man of heroic stature, a martyr of the noblest mould. Why such persecution? What phase of religion, what peculiarity of worship in the name of the Founder of Christianity could justify the persecution to the death of a man, refined, scholarly, with no seditious tendencies, against whom the only charge that could be brought was that he was bent upon translating the Holy Scriptures from original manuscripts in Greek and Hebrew into the language of the people of England?

Briefly, Tyndale was guilty of the offense of bringing the Word of God to the masses, that they might be saved from the sins of the flesh. Truly a heinous charge! Yet, be it remembered that opposed to Tyndale and his works as leaders in his persecution, were men of character and standing, men of good repute, convinced of the justice and righteousness of their course. These men held that since the Church was the source and seat of all ecclesiastical authority, the Church alone should inspire and supervise for the people the preparation and use of the Bible. The Church was the body which gave authority to



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WILLIAM TYNDALE

the Bible, and the Church was its custodian under all circumstances. It is easy to see how from this position on the part of the Church sprang the intense opposition to any movement to translate the Bible as Tyndale proposed to do, and did. Private enterprise in relation to publicizing the Holy Scriptures, being without the authority of the Church, might easily lead to their corruption through mistranslation and ignorance. Such was the argument of godly men like Sir Thomas More and Bishop Cranmer. Yet granting their anxiety to preserve the entity, authority, and accuracy of the Scriptures, it is difficult to reconcile Christian living with persecution and pursuit even to the stake.

The only answer to this state of affairs at all satisfactory to a twentieth century enquirer is that the acts of the churchmen of the sixteenth century may not be justly judged from the standard of these later times. The demonstration of Christianity as the way of life has moved a long way in the intervening years. New standards of character have been evolved, and humanity as a whole has softened much in its concepts of the brotherly relationship enjoined by word and practice of the Nazarene upon all who would be known as Christians.

Like all revolutionary movements, the Reformation did not come in a day. It was the flaming up of deep dissatisfaction with tendencies in the Church which had smouldered for centuries. The breath of the Renaissance, increased and intensified by Wycliffe, had much to do with the inflammatory outburst at Worms, after implacable Luther had nailed his theses to the church door in Wittenberg. Our concern, however, is with the effect of the Reformation upon the Bible. The hour had struck. The people of England, no less than of Germany, were no longer to be held in bondage to superstition and fear. The time was ripe for a "People's Bible."

In spite of all the opposition of the Church, in spite of the burning of thousands of Tyndale's New Testaments, through the facility of the printing press the supply kept up. Finally the eyes of the clergy were opened and it was recognized that the desire of the people to know more of God, to learn directly of the teachings and works of the Nazarene, could no longer be thwarted.

Tyndale had led a revolution, but his work was not finished. Having completed the translation of his New Testament from the Greek, as errors were discovered he made many revisions. Then he turned his attention to translating the Old Testament from its original Hebrew, a work which he carried on even after cast into prison. He did not, however, succeed in producing a complete Bible. Translation of the Pentateuch, Historical Books, and a part of the Prophets comprised his work on the Old Testament. Often he made marginal notes and comments, many of which clearly set forth his attitude toward the clergy, the Pope and the Church. In the margin of his translation of Exodus 32:35, we find this: "The Pope's bull slayeth more than Aaron's calf." Upon the story in Exodus 36:5, etc., of the forbidding of the people to bring more offerings for the construction of the tabernacle, he makes this marginal comment: "When will the Pope say 'Hoo!' [hold] and forbid an offering for the building of St. Peter's church? And when will our spirituality say 'Hoo!' and forbid to give them more land? Never until they have all."

No better reminder could be had of Tyndale's attitude toward the Church and the great body of clergy who had so obstinately fought the invasion of England by a Bible other than one approved by themselves, than is found in these marginal comments. Yet it seems, so great was his desire to bring the Word of God to the people, that he was willing to make any sacrifice, even to give up life

itself. His holy purpose was far above any desire to promote his own name or fame. In fact, the first editions of the New Testament appeared without his name. To an emissary of the Church from England who had come to dissuade him from his purpose, he replied: "If it would stand with the King's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the Scriptures to be put forth among his people, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his Majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his royal Majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea what death, his grace will, so this be obtained" (Baikie's *Romance of the Bible*, p. 171). What better evidence could there be of the unselfishness of the man's purpose? Surely no greater sacrifice could be made for a just cause than that he so humbly proffered. That he was to suffer martyrdom, he had little doubt, and although it was brought about by trickery and malice, it did not daunt the spirit which had carried him forward in an enterprise where such a fate seemed inevitable.

As the executioner did his work, Tyndale said: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." That already the great purpose of his life had been accomplished, he probably was not aware. The printing press had defeated the efforts to prevent the publication and circulation of his English Bible. Already the work was done, despite the opposition of Church and State. So that a year after Tyndale's passing, Foxe, Bishop of Hereford, could say at the Church Council of Convocation: "The lay people do now know the Holy Scripture better than many of us." Erasmus' wish that the day would come when the ploughman could sing the words of the Bible as he trudged behind his plough had been fulfilled. Tyndale's purpose had

been realized. The people had the Bible in their own tongue, and apart from the will of the Church. One great step toward freedom of conscience had been gained. Another had yet to be taken: the right of the individual to worship God after the manner of his own choosing. The Puritan movement had not yet done its work.

The years immediately following Tyndale's martyrdom were eloquent with progress in the promotion of Bible production in England. The leaven of Truth at work even during Tyndale's day brought about a great reversal in the attitude of King Henry and the Bishops toward the problem of giving the Bible to the people. It came about in this way: the circulation of some fifty thousand of Tyndale's version, in spite of all the opposition, opened the eyes of the King and those in charge of the spiritual welfare of the people. Furthermore, the King was no longer willing to be governed entirely by the authorities in Rome as to the forms and methods of worship. The spirit of liberation was abroad.

This growing conviction that the people would have the Bible in spite of all opposition led to an effort to produce a translation which would be acceptable to both clergy and Bishops, and perhaps most important of all would be free from the influence of the Church at Rome. Tyndale's words were bearing fruitage. The King's eyes were being opened. Some time later Convocation over which Bishop Cranmer presided petitioned the King that an English Bible might be published. The times were moving rapidly. Tyndale's work had breached the walls of ignorance and bigotry, and through this aperture rushed a tide of determination to spread the Word of God to all the kingdom. Indeed, the King's eyes had now been opened!

It was, however, too much to expect that Henry would so far reverse himself as openly to accept Tyndale's trans-

lation. Another must be prepared. Consequently, a scholar was sought equal to the undertaking of the great task. Such a man was found in the person of Myles Coverdale, scholar and religionist, as opposite to Tyndale in his mental habits as two men could be whose aims and purposes were so nearly identical. Where Tyndale was bold, militant, and aggressive in his stand for right as he saw it, Coverdale, no less devoted to his cause, was mild, quiet, modest, of retiring disposition and opposed to controversy. Where Tyndale excelled in aptness in the use of language, so necessary to a successful translator, Coverdale was a master of excellent English but less profound as a scholar; and it is said his work drew upon many translations, upon Tyndale's more than any other. Furthermore, Coverdale had aided Tyndale at Hamburg in the translation of the Pentateuch.

The complete English Bible in this new translation appeared in 1535. It has been said of it that while it greatly influenced subsequent translations, yet its most remarkable feature was its dedication, "Unto the most victorious Prynce, and oure moste gracyous soueraigne Lorde, Kynge Henry the eyght, Kynge of Englonde and of Fraunce, lord of Irlonde &c. Defendour of the Fayth, and vnder God the chefe and suppreme heade of the Church of Englonde." Great changes had been wrought in a single decade, else such dedication would have cost the translator his head or a burning at the stake. Even more impressive is the fact that just one year after Tyndale's martyrdom, that is, in 1537, the second edition of Coverdale's Bible bore the legend, "Set forth with the Kynges moost gracious licence."

Coverdale's work was not from original sources, but rather a version of a version. Its importance, however, was great, for the second edition was the first complete Bible printed in the English language. Among the five sources

from which he drew was Luther's German version. Coverdale was the first translator for whose work the printing press was ready at hand. To the forerunners of the Authorized Version both Tyndale and Coverdale made important contributions. Much even of the melodious phrasing of these pioneer translators appears in the King James Bible. Also it is said that when the Prayer Book was revised in 1662, Coverdale's translation of the Psalms was accepted "as being smoother and more suitable for adaptation to music."

Examples of Coverdale's cadences are numerous. "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever"; again, "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me"; and this stately passage, "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands." These passages exhibit not only the skill and spiritual feeling of an apt translator but they show forth "the sense of rhythm, melody, and harmony, which mark the great musician in words, and which enable him to create a solemn and stately music out of the common words of our daily speech" (Baikie in "The English Bible and Its History," p. 212). Coverdale's translation is sometimes called the "Treacle Bible," because of its rendition of Jeremiah 8:22, "Is there no treacle in Gilead."

The breach in the wall of ignorance widened so rapidly that in the very year of Coverdale's second edition there appeared another Bible dedicated "To the moost Noble and Gracyous Prynce Kyng Henry the eyght" and bearing the same legend as its contemporary. This translation was the work of John Rogers, who was a close friend of Tyndale, and his executor.

To avoid any difficulty that might arise from Rogers' known connection with Tyndale's work, it was com-

monly termed "Matthew's Bible." It was in large part a reproduction of Tyndale's translation, especially the first half of the Old Testament and all the New. The latter part of the former bore so close a resemblance to Coverdale's rendition that of original work there was very little. And because of this, friends of the martyr found a depth of satisfaction in Cranmer's assertion that he liked it "better than any translation hitherto made." And he further declared that if they should wait for the Bishops to bring out a better translation, they would wait "till a day after domesday."

The irony of the situation is seen in the decree of the King in 1543 "that all manner of bookes of the old and newe testament in Englishe, beinge of the craftie, false, and vntrue translacion of Tindall . . . shall be by auctoritie of this present acte clerely and vtterlie abolished, extinguished, and forbidden," while at the same time Matthew's Bible which contained the substance of Tyndale's work was circulated under royal license. Thus it is seen that the ecclesiastical approval of Matthew's Bible was nothing else than a huge bluff. The stone which the builders rejected had, indeed, become the headstone of the corner.

John Rogers' experience was that of many staunch supporters of the cause against Rome, for he was the first of the group of stalwarts who went to the stake at the instigation of Queen Mary, at Smithfield, in 1555. Denied the privilege of a last interview with his wife and children, he went to his doom for a faith which he would not retract even though he should be burned alive. He was but one of the three hundred or more who met a similar fate under what is known as the "Marian persecution." Such was but a part of the price which the people paid for the privilege of a free Bible and the rights of conscience.

Today students of Bible history generally acknowledge that we of this generation owe a great debt to both Tyndale and Coverdale. The translations worked out by these courageous and scholarly men are without doubt the basis of most, if not all, subsequent revisions of the English Bible. The Great Bible, The Bishop's Bible, and after these the Authorized Version, done under the patronage of King James, are so completely based upon Tyndale's works that probably eighty per cent of what we read in our authorized Bible today may be traced directly to his translation.

But in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century the time was not yet ripe for royalty to acknowledge this fact. There was need in this great cause of gaining religious freedom to soften prejudice, to eliminate personal pride, to gain a deeper sense of the mission of Christianity, in order to make ready for truth and justice to become manifest toward the pioneer martyrs. Certain prominent churchmen, of whom Thomas Cromwell was one, were not satisfied to promote the circulation and use either of Tyndale's version or of Matthew's Bible. Probably Cromwell was fearful that the King might some day read these versions and trouble would arise anew. Accordingly, this militant churchman looked about for a translator to bring out a Bible acceptable to the King, and finally settled upon Myles Coverdale as the most available and at the same time the most amenable to such directions as might be deemed necessary in order to produce a truly great work.

Coverdale agreed to undertake the work and was sent to Paris to supervise the publishing of the book. The translation, based largely upon Tyndale's work, went on apace, and the next step was to find a printer of the skill and facility necessary to the bringing out of a monumental work. No English printer was deemed equal to

the task. Accordingly, Cromwell turned to Regnault of Paris, the most famous printer of the period.

King Henry had given royal consent to the plan, and Francis I of France also gave approval to the enterprise, a sanction which, however, as later events proved, had little if any value. It appears that the influence of the Church in Rome was brought to bear upon the French King, with the result that he completely reversed his attitude toward the enterprise. Coverdale and the English printer who had been engaged to publish the work in England were in great fear lest the influence which had upset the French royal support might also reach across the Channel to interfere with if not completely to frustrate their plans. The fact that the French printer was doing his work under the license of the King was not thought to be a safeguard against the claim of authority on the part of the Church to control and direct all affairs of the Church, including the production of Bibles, even in the English tongue.

In October, 1538, Bishop Bonner, who was England's Ambassador to France, informed the English Chancellor that the work had been stopped, and no appeal of the French authorities was of avail in getting it started again. Bonner, finding his protests of no avail and being immune from restraint, returned to his homeland with his baggage stuffed with sheets of the new Bible. Two months later Regnault was summoned to appear "before the Holy Inquisition for the dreadful crime of printing the Word of God in English by special licence of his own king" (Baikie's *Romance of the Bible*). Could any evidence more clearly prove the power of the Church even over the authority of the kingship of France? The printed sheets not sent through to England in Bonner's luggage were burned in the Place Maubert. But not all. A Paris hatterer needing paper for his hats bought sheets for

his needs, "four great coppersfull." These were bought back by friends of the Bible and ultimately a hundred copies or so were saved.

This turn of events did not thwart the purpose of Cromwell. In due time, Regnault's presses and type were bought up and transported across the Channel, and presently the Great Bible came out in unlimited numbers. And so at last, in 1539, by royal sanction and support, the work begun by William Tyndale scarcely a score of years before found successful issue in a manner far more favorable to the accomplishment of his holy purpose than seemed at all likely when first he set out upon his perilous enterprise. Cromwell, as the King's favorite officer, had supported the work from the beginning. In September, 1538, he issued an order to the clergy of the kingdom to provide before a given date "one boke of the whole Bible, in the largest volume, in Englyshe, sett up in summe convenient place within the churche that ye have cure of, whereat your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same and rede yt" (Price, *The Ancestry of our English Bible*, p. 256).

The world has seen few greater reversals of mental attitude in so brief a period. In 1525-26, Tyndale's New Testament burned at Paul's Cross: 1538-40, the Great Bible, largely a reprint of the martyr's work, by royal sanction ordered to be made available to all to read! How truly does God work "in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform"! The popularity of the book is seen in the fact that seven editions were published in two years.

The Great Bible was truly a magnificent book. It was fifteen inches in height by nine broad, surely not a pocket edition. Its title page was said to have been designed by Hans Holbein himself. It represents King Henry seated on his throne giving out Bibles to the clergy, headed by Bishop Cranmer, and to the people standing at the left

with Cromwell at their head. At the bottom of the page a clergyman is declaring the truth to the crowd, who in turn reply, some with "Vivat Rex" and others with "God save the King." The stage was being set for the greatest event of all, the preparation and production of the Authorized Version.

In the same year as the appearance of the Great Bible another version was published in two editions, a quarto and an octavo. This was the work of R. Taverner, an Oxford scholar, a lawyer who was well versed in Greek but knew little of Hebrew. The Old Testament followed rather closely the text of Matthew's Bible, but the New Testament was his own translation. Although dedicated to the King in a dignified and courteous manner, it had but little vogue, being superseded by the Great Bible which now became the popular version of the Sacred Scriptures.

The Geneva and Later Bibles

THE Great Bible was more widely circulated by far than any of its predecessors. Scores of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, found their way into the hands of the people, and it seemed that the struggle so valiantly begun and carried on by Wycliffe and Tyndale had at last won an unchallenged victory. But such was not the case. During the latter years of Henry's reign there set in a reactionary movement which grew to such proportions that it materially checked the flow of the Scriptures to the hands of the people. In 1542, Convocation, that is, the Assembly of Bishops, directed by the King, sought to provide a new translation, to meet the opposition. The plan was adopted of allotting books of the New Testament among the Bishops for translation. One Bishop, however, insisted on the retention of many words untranslated, so many in fact that thereby the whole project became a subject of ridicule.

The Bishops' Bible, as then planned, was produced in 1542, but it failed. The next year an act forbade the use of Tyndale's translation. This was followed a few years later by the burning of Coverdale's version, and the right to read the Bible was limited to certain classes. So oppressive became the movement to take the Bible from the people that it seemed at one time that all the labors of the years had come to naught. However, the passing of Henry in 1547 and the accession of Edward VI to the throne quite turned the tide. The new King was a friend to the cause of Protestantism and to the general circulation of

the Bible. Accordingly, printing and distribution of the Scriptures gained great impetus during his all too brief reign.

Edward's successor on the throne, Queen Mary, immediately began a hostile movement, not alone toward the distribution of the Bible, but she moved with great violence against the prominent churchmen of England. Under the influence of the Church at Rome many were sent to the stake, martyrs to a prejudice most difficult to understand at this present day. The persecutions of Queen Mary also sent many churchmen out of England, and Geneva became the gathering place for these expatriates. The city by Lake Lemman became the spiritual and intellectual center of the Protestant movement for a large portion of Europe. Among those refugees were Coverdale and Whittingham, Calvin and Froment, John Knox and Beza, eminent Bible scholars. As would be expected at the gathering of so many distinguished scholars, some important steps toward solving the problem of a proper Bible were bound to be taken.

In 1557, there appeared at Geneva a quaint little volume inscribed on the title page, "The Newe Testament of ovr Lord Iesus Christ. Conferred diligently with the Greke, and best approued translations." While its author is uncertain, it is probably the work of William Whittingham, who succeeded Knox in the Protestant pulpit at Geneva. Calvin wrote the introduction. The text was divided into verses and sections, for the first time in an English Bible. The completeness and accuracy of this New Testament at once won great popularity for it in England.

Heartened by the reception of the "Newe Testament," the learned group at Geneva, which contained such men as Coverdale and Beza, the latter recognized as the greatest Bible scholar of his time, set to work to prepare a re-

vision of the Great Bible that should be at once both accurate and scholarly. Accordingly, they tarried at Geneva even after Elizabeth's accession to the throne, and in 1560 brought out the Geneva Bible, graciously dedicated to their Queen. The congregation at Geneva bore the expense of printing. John Bodley, father of the founder of Oxford's famous Bodleian Library, secured from Elizabeth the exclusive right to publish the Bible in England for seven years. The type was plain Roman, which superseded the black letters of the previous Bible. Explanatory notes, terse and simple, appeared in the margins.

While this Geneva version did not displace the Great Bible in the churches, it won great popularity among the people. It became so popular that by 1611 one hundred and twenty editions were published. Baikie says of the Geneva Bible that its "influence upon the intellectual and spiritual outlook of the nation at the most urgent crisis of its history cannot be overrated" (*The English Bible and Its Story*, p. 239). This has been commonly known as "the Breeches Bible" because of the translation of Genesis 3:7, where Adam and Eve are represented as having made "breeches" for themselves. This, however, was in accord with Wycliffe's translation which reads: "And whan yei knewen yat ya were naked ya sewiden ye levis of a fige tre and madin brechis." As the book was much less cumbersome than the Great Bible, its size added greatly to its popularity, and even the Puritans, then a growing body of reformers, found its texts much to their liking. It was another long forward step toward the Authorized Version.

When once a rift in the dyke is opened, a flood is pretty sure to follow. When once the publishing of the Bible in English was permitted, even licensed by royal decree, the versions multiplied rapidly. The Great Bible and the Geneva version, popular as they were, did not satisfy

the churchmen. They must have the chief part in a new translation. Accordingly, in 1563-64, Archbishop Parker started the movement for a Bible to be translated by prominent churchmen, for the most part Bishops, to each of whom should be assigned a definite portion of the work. It seems not to have occurred to this learned prelate that such a plan might result in a work quite lacking in unity. The Archbishop was to be the editor-in-chief, while the work of translation was to be done for the most part by nine Bishops. Quite logically the work was to be termed the "Bishops' Bible." One exception at least was made in the approach to a Court official. A note was dispatched to Cecil, Elizabeth's principal minister, asking him to favor them with his translation of an Epistle "of S. Paul or Peter or Jamys," an offer which the statesman refused, apparently realizing in the request the intent of the Archbishop to gain at least a semblance of royal favor.

The editor-in-chief took for his part of the work Genesis, Exodus, Matthew and Mark, and the major portion of Paul's Epistles. The balance of the Bible was apportioned to such churchmen as Andrew Pearson, the Canon of Canterbury, William Alley, Bishop of Exeter, Thomas Bacon, a Prebendary of Canterbury, etc. When in October, 1568, the version appeared in stately folio, it was found to contain on the title page a portrait of the Queen and the title "The Holie Bible, containing the Old Testament and the New." The frontispiece of the book of Joshua was adorned with a portrait of Lord Leicester, while a portrait of Cecil, Lord Burleigh, adorned that of Psalms. Like the Geneva Bible, the text was divided into verses and there were many "helps" in the form of maps, almanacs, pictures, tables, etc. The Old Testament was nearly a reproduction of the Geneva Bible. But better scholarship was manifested in the New Testament. In the editions which followed many improvements were made.

Because of the general support given it by the churchmen, the Bishops' Bible quickly displaced the Great Bible in the churches, but it did not win popularity either among scholars or the people. Its lack of unity was too manifest. It was held in high regard, however, by the ecclesiastics and passed through some nineteen editions in forty years. The way was being opened for an adequate version of the Holy Scriptures.

As the tide of religious prestige ebbed and flowed between Protestant and Catholic, striking reversals occurred in the positions of the two groups. When during the reign of Queen Mary many Protestants fled for safety to the Continent, under Elizabeth's stand for Protestantism many Catholics in England took the same course. While the Geneva group that brought out a translation of the Bible had as their chief aim to bring Protestant England in line with Continental Calvinism, the Roman Catholic refugees gathered at Douai strove under Jesuit influence to bring Roman Catholic England into conformity with the Roman Church. To carry out this purpose, they undertook to produce a translation of the Bible which should more nearly conform to these views than any that had hitherto been published. Moreover, it did not seem to be consistent for the Roman Catholic body to accept and adopt a Bible translated into English by those who were in such complete disagreement with the cardinal doctrines of the Church at Rome. They still held to the theory that, as stated in the Douai version, to give the Scriptures to the common people was to cast "the holy to dogges and pearles to hogges." One cannot but wonder how such characterization appealed to the masses who were to be reached by the Word of God.

In 1568, the Romanists who as refugees had settled in Douai, a city of Flanders, founded there an English College. Already this city was a center of learning, being the

seat of a University which Philip of Spain had established in 1562. An Oxford man, William Allen, founder of the College, afterwards Cardinal, determined to publish a Bible in English for Roman Catholics who spoke the English language. Gregory Martin, another Oxford graduate, assumed charge of the work. He was assisted by Richard Bristow and probably by other Englishmen, among whom were Dr. James Reynolds and Dr. Worthington.

Political disturbance in Flanders caused the work to be transferred to Rheims in 1578. Four years later, the entire work of translation had been completed and the New Testament published. It bears the legend — "Printed at Rhemes by Iohn Figny, 1582. Cvm privilegio." It was the avowed purpose of these translators to hasten the "speedy abolishing of a number of false and impious translations put forth by sundry sectes, and for the better preservation or reclaime of many good soules endangered thereby."

The translation of the Old Testament was also completed, but its publication was delayed because of lack of funds. To modern scholars it seems more than passing strange that the Church at Rome should have permitted to languish an enterprise which had for its avowed purpose the countervailing of the work of the Reformers in circulating the Scriptures among the people. Not until 1609 was the Old Testament published. Protestant scholars point to this long delay in publishing the antidote to the Geneva Bible as an indication of the attitude of the Roman Church toward the Scriptures.

As would be expected, the translation was made from Jerome's Latin version. It stated on its title page: "The Holie Bible, Faithfully Translated into English out of the authentical Latin." The contention that Jerome's translation having been made from very early manuscripts was more accurate than any manuscripts in Greek or

Hebrew available in the sixteenth century is worthy of some consideration. This contention, however, is based upon the assumption that Jerome's translation had come down through the centuries without substantial change, an assumption be it said without supporting proof. In view of the known changes that other Scriptural texts have undergone, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Vulgate is not an exception. In fact, the Council of Trent, in 1546, at which the Church finally gave its stamp of approval to the Canon, recognized that in adopting the Vulgate there was need carefully to examine the text in order to insure that the versions then extant were accurate reproductions of the originals. Dr. Moulton has characterized the Douai text as "literal and (as a rule if not always) scrupulously faithful and exact." In general it may be said to follow the Latin version with complete faithfulness. For this reason, instead of presenting a new and inspiring rendition of the original texts, it may be justly described as a version of a version. Furthermore, the retention of words in the Latin is sufficient to enable critics to declare that it is not a Bible in the English language.

Dr. Baikie, who takes a strong position as to the lack of accuracy and hence as to the value of this version, points to the rendition of the Twenty-third Psalm as illustrative of its inadequacy. "Thou hast fattened my head with oyle: and my chalace inebriating how goodlie is it! . . . And that I may dwel in the house of our Lord, in longitude of dayes." A familiar passage from Paul's pen reads thus: "Our wrestling is not against flesh and bloud: but against Princes and Potestats, against the rectors of the world of this darkenes, against the spirituals of wickednes in the celestials." Dr. Baikie cites as perhaps the prize passage as to its oddity, Isaiah 13:21 "The Syrach owls shall answer, and mermaids in the temples of pleasure."

Of the copious notes accompanying the translations, it may be said that they manifestly carry out the purpose of the projectors of the enterprise. Fair judgment as to their accuracy and worth can be arrived at only by comparing them with the notes of the Geneva Bible. Such comparisons it seems can lead to but one conclusion, viz., that the Douai translators had the purpose, primarily, to promote certain preconceived views regarding the Scriptures rather than the bringing out of a more perfect rendition of the early sources, Greek and Hebrew.

Soon after its appearance, Fulke, eminent Bible scholar, printed a sharp criticism of many of the marginal notes of the Douai New Testament. Later in parallel columns he issued the second edition of the Bishops' Bible and the Rheims New Testament. It is said that the result was to make popular this version of the New Testament. At least it was reprinted three times in sixty-eight years, while the Old Testament was printed but once in that period.

XXVI

The Authorized Version

DURING the reign of Elizabeth, the Puritan movement had made headway despite the opposition of the Crown. Yet, as with all religious movements today, opposition and persecution tended to unify and consolidate its adherents. And this was no less true with the movement to purify the Church of England in the 16th century than in the early days of Christianity. In questions of conscience, the human heart has stood against fearful odds.

When James the First was on his way to be crowned King, a petition purporting to represent the desire of a thousand clergy was presented to him, asking that while the Conformists were at liberty to use whatever pleased them in the English Prayer Book, they, the Puritans, should be free to discard whatever appeared to them as based upon superstition arising from faulty translation, and therefore as misrepresenting true Christian doctrine. It seems today that these demands were just although of comparatively small importance. Moreover, the Puritans may have had some grounds for expecting liberal treatment at the hands of the new King.

James was known as a student of the Bible. He had translated parts of the Psalter and had written a paraphrase of the Apocalypse, of a nature that led Dr. Baillie to remark that it was, "not the best evidence of his sanity on Bible questions." Be that as it may, a conference was called by the King at Hampton Court in January, 1604, ostensibly to consider the petition of the Puritans, but

more probably, say some historians, to enable the proud King to exhibit his authority over matters ecclesiastical as well as secular. Dr. John Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College, at Oxford, as spokesman for the petitioners presented certain passages from both the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles as examples of mistranslation; and upon such false interpretations, he claimed, was the Prayer Book based. No royal answer was made to the Puritans' request, but the King took occasion to deliver a rather violent speech in which he connected the Puritan movement with the Presbytery of Scotland, a movement which never failed to arouse his wrath. His address has been termed undignified and utterly lacking in the breadth of vision and sympathy befitting the ruler of a free people.

Yet the conference was not in vain. Although the King made no direct answer to the Puritans' prayer, yet a seed was implanted in the kingly mind which later bore fruit in the form of the "Authorized" version of the Bible. In the translators' preface to this version the circumstances which apparently influenced James to provide for another translation of the Holy Scriptures are set forth: "For the very Historicall trueth is, that vpon the importunate petitions of the Puritanes, at his Maiesties comming to this Crowne, the Conference at Hampton Court hauing bene appointed for hearing these complaints; when by force of reason they were put off from all other grounds, they had recourse at the last to this shift, that they could not with good conscience subscribe to the Communion book since it maintained the Bible as it was there translated, which was as they said, a most corrupted translation. And although this was iudged to be but a very poore and emptie shift; yet euen hereupon did his Maiestie beginne to bethinke himselfe of the good that might ensue by a new translation, and presently after gaue order for

this translation which is presented vnto thee. Thus much to satisfie our scrupulous Brethren" (Baikie, p. 261).

A somewhat different account of the providings of that eventful day has come down to us from the pen of an observer, William Barlow, Dean of Chester. Because he was not in sympathy either with the Puritan movement or the substance of their petition, he may be accepted as an impartial witness. He says regarding the presentation to the King of the Puritans' grievances by Dr. Reynolds: "After that, he moued his Maiestie, that there might bee a newe *translation* of the *Bible*, because, those which were allowed in the raignes of *Henrie* the eight and *Edward* the sixt, were corrupt and not aunswerable to the truth of the Originall. . . . To which motion, there was, at the present, no gainsaying, the obiections being triuall and old, and alreadie, in print, often aunswered; onely, my Lord of London (Bishop Bancroft, obviously a true successor of Cuthbert Tunstall) well added, that if euery mans humour should be followed, there would be no ende of translating" (Baikie, p. 262).

The King now set himself to provide the machinery for the carrying out of his great purpose. And he acted wisely, for he called the ablest Bible scholars as well as men of known attainment in methods of literary composition. He saw the opportunity to do a popular and permanent piece of work for the Church and for all the people. There is no doubt that the enterprise made special appeal to him because of his own theological trend and experience in the study and translation of the Scriptures.

The list of translators chosen by the King included Anglican churchmen, Puritans, and certain laymen who were eminent scholars, in all fifty-four, although but forty-seven, it appears, undertook the work. Among these the work of translation was apportioned. The list included Bishops, Professors at Oxford and Cambridge, Archdea-

cons, Rectors, and Professors of Greek and Hebrew. Dr. John Reynolds, who presented the case at the Hampton Court Conference, and Dr. George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, were included in the number. But because the money to pay the Committee and provide for expenses was not forthcoming, the work was delayed for nearly three years and during the period Dr. Lively, Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, one of the best equipped scholars, succumbed to illness.

It appears that the methods by which the funds were finally attained are not clearly understood even today. Dr. Baikie says that but for the fact of one piece of evidence which remains to us, the means by which the funds were provided would parallel in mystery the feeding of Elijah by the ravens. And the one piece of evidence is to the effect, as worded by William Ball, that Robert Barker, printer, paid £3,500 for the corrected translations, which transaction made him owner and publisher of the work.

The translators were divided into six groups, two groups each at Westminster, Oxford, and Cambridge. To each group was assigned a portion of the Scriptures, the translation of which was at first their specific task. The Westminster group took up the translation of Genesis to II Kings, inclusive, and of the New Testament from Romans to Jude, inclusive. To the Oxford group was assigned Isaiah to Malachi, inclusive, and also the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and Revelation. The Cambridge group centered their attention upon the balance of the Old Testament, I Chronicles to Ecclesiastes, inclusive, and the Apocryphal writings.

Definite rules were laid down to govern the conduct of the work, fifteen in all. Rule 1 stated that "The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the Truth of the original will permit." Thus it is plain that the

task was one of comparison and revision rather than of translation. Another rule provided that the names of the Prophets and the Holy Writers were to be retained "as they were vulgarly used"; and that where a word had divers meanings, the one most commonly used by the Ancient Fathers should be kept; that the division of the chapters should be altered as little as possible, if at all.

Rules 8 and 9 provided that "Every particular Man of each Company, to take the same Chapter, or Chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their Parts what shall stand." And "as any one Company hath dispatched any one Book in this Manner they shall send it to the rest, to be consider'd of seriously and judiciously, for His Majesty is very careful to this point." If differences of opinion arose as to the use of given words or sentences, the "Difference to be compounded at the General Meeting, which is to be of the chief Persons of each Company at the end of the Work."

Provision was also made, in case of irreconcilable differences among the Workers, for consulting any learned person of the land who might be able to help solve the difficulties. A breadth of purpose is seen in the rule which stated that when any other text appeared to be better than the Bishops' Bible that was to be consulted and utilized, and "Tindoll's, Matthews', Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, and the Geneva" Bibles were specifically named. The rules were comprehensive and adequate to the high purpose of the enterprise. It was the purpose of the translators to take from their predecessors, that is, from Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Rogers, and all the other translators of the 15th and 16th centuries, what was most acceptable and carry it over into modern English, which could be readily understood, to all succeeding gen-

erations of English-speaking people. It is well to recall that this work was carried on at what most critics would call the zenith of England's glory in the field of literature. Shakespeare, Bacon, Ben Jonson, Milton, Spenser are among the great names belonging to this period. Surely no subsequent galaxy of literary stars of any country is comparable with the late 16th and early 17th century writers, and in consequence a standard of English was set that has not been surpassed.

The work of translation and comparison was carried on with diligence and unfailing care. When a group had finished its assignment, two of its members, twelve in all, were appointed to review the work in London. The fact that seven years were taken in which to complete the task, together with due consideration of the type of men engaged, is a clear indication of the quality of the product, so far as accuracy and purity of language are concerned. The Authorized Version finally appeared from the press of R. Barker in 1611. It was a folio volume in size, and had no notes.

Of necessity an enterprise of such magnitude entailed a large expenditure of money. When the problem of financing the work arose, there were those who called attention to the fact that as the project was set afoot by the King, it would be entirely feasible for him to provide for it. But unfortunately the King was in a state of what has been called "chronic impecuniosity." But he was resourceful. Why should not the Church foot the bill since the new Bible would be the property of the Church? A practical question, all will agree. Accordingly, under Royal direction Bishop Bancroft was requested to circulate a letter to the Bishops of the country calling upon them to rally to the necessity of raising from their various dioceses the funds necessary to the successful completion of the enterprise. But the plan was not a success. A

second message was issued, but with no better results. And it appears that meagre funds were finally provided by certain colleges at Oxford and Cambridge; meagre indeed, for it is generally held that the sum received by each translator for his long and arduous labors could not have been more than £75, and probably it was much less.

Several of the translators did not live to see the fruits of their devoted labors given to the world. Among these were Dr. John Reynolds, a scholar of so great attainment that resort was often made to his judgment and superior learning. He it was who inspired the whole project by questioning the King at the Hampton Court Conference. His devotion to his work, even when lying ill on his pallet, has been likened to the experience of the Venerable Bede who finished his translation of the Fourth Gospel almost with his last breath. Dr. Reynolds was a Puritan of highest type, strong in his convictions but quiet and refined in all his ways.

The Authorized Version, as it came from the press, carried on its title page this inscription: "Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former Translations diligently compared and reuised, by his Maiesties speciall Comandement." The prominent translations which were drawn upon lead directly back to Tyndale. As there was wanting a standard Hebrew text of the Old Testament, use was made of the four current Hebrew Bibles and the Polyglots. Thus in general was insured a faithful representation of the Hebrew text. In the opinion of Dr. Price the "New Testament is so chaste and expressive in language and form that it is even said to surpass the original Greek as a piece of literature" (*The Ancestry of the Bible*, p. 279).

Another statement appearing on the title page has occasioned much controversy, "Appointed to be read in Churches" seems to indicate some authoritative decree,

probably from the King, who first set the plan on foot. But there is no evidence that there ever was such authorization. It has been suggested that it was "authorized" by an Order in Council, and that the records of this act were destroyed by fire in Whitehall in 1618. Be that as it may, there is no trace of any act on the part of King James that would justify this designation. But as the term "Authorized Version" has come to be so commonly used, there is no doubt it will so continue to signify that version of the Sacred Scriptures which has brought solace, healing, and comfort to uncounted millions.

XXVII

The Bible Comes to America

NOT all the early comers to America were religiously inclined. Not all brought with them the version of the Scriptures which was commonly used in the homeland. Of the early comers from Spain to the Southwest and to Florida, practically all were of the Roman Catholic faith, as were the French who moved westward through territory now comprised in Canada and the northern United States. The earliest comers of this persuasion would have been limited in their worship to the Vulgate, that is, if they held true to their traditions, as the Douai-Rheims Version was not brought out until 1582.

The Cavaliers who settled at Jamestown were at first limited to the use of the Bibles issued prior to the Authorized Version, the Geneva Bible or the Great Bible. It was left to the Pilgrims to first bring to America the King James Version, a fact that viewed at this distance seems wholly fitting; for were they not the only group that came to America solely for conscience' sake, that is, freedom to worship God in the way of their own choosing? It was from the pages of this truly noble rendition of the Sacred Scriptures that they gained the unflinching faith, the fortitude, courage, and lofty idealism which brought them on one of the greatest enterprises ever undertaken.

With the task before the early comers, of whatever nationality, of establishing homes and communities in the New World, it was wholly logical that they should draw upon their respective homelands for such supplies as



Courtesy New York Public Library

"PILGRIMS GOING TO CHURCH"
From a painting by George H. Boughton

could not be immediately produced in their forbidding surroundings. Bibles could be imported, and at reasonable prices. Accordingly, more than a century passed after the coming of the Pilgrims before the production of a Bible was undertaken anywhere in the Colonies. There was, however, one notable exception, the translation and production of a Bible in the Natick dialect of the Algonquin tribe of Indians. The story is a fascinating one. John Eliot came over from England in 1631, a member of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. An ardent religionist, almost immediately he became intensely interested in the natives, and soon developed an unquenchable desire to bring to them a better concept of life and of living. Among the necessities which confronted him in his plans to civilize these dusky people was that of producing an edition of the Sacred Scriptures in their own language. The task would have appalled a less zealous apostle. To translate the Bible into a tongue without the slightest literary background, without dictionary, grammar, or alphabet, was a task indeed. But Eliot did not falter. While serving as pastor in Roxbury, Massachusetts, he interested many Indians in Christianity, among them a young man who developed a keen interest in the new religion, and was enthusiastic over the proposition to publish a Bible in his native tongue. Using him as interpreter, Eliot set to the task, expressing his purpose in these words, "I have had a great longing desire, if it were the will of God, that our Indian language might be sanctified by the translation of the Holy Scriptures into it."

Not alone the translation, but the printing of his Bible was also a troublesome problem. There were no printing houses in America, no paper mills, no presses, no part of the necessary equipment. All these were in due time brought from England. In 1654, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were produced. Four years

later, the Psalms were published; the New Testament followed in 1661, and the complete Bible in 1663, nine years after Elliot began his great task. Several revisions followed in later years, the last work having been delayed until 1685.

The Eliot Bible was printed by Green and Johnson in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and as the edition was small, it is now a very rare book and commands a high price. Many amusing anecdotes are told of the serious undertaking of producing the Scriptures in a language with no literature. Of necessity, Eliot's only recourse oftentimes was to repeat a sentence in the Indian dialect, which he had learned in part, and depend upon the answer received. In the passage Judges 5:28, "The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice," the word "lattice" was a poser for the dusky interpreter. Finally, not having been able successfully to explain the word, Eliot wove from willow twigs the semblance of a lattice. But the Indian's chief use for plaited willow twigs was in fashioning eel-pots. So that the Natick for "eel-pot" was put in, and that passage read that Sisera's mother "cried through the eel-pot."

Perhaps no better tribute could be paid to the zeal of the early comers to bring to the benighted natives the blessings of Christianity than the fact of the production of the Eliot Bible, the first version of the Scriptures to be produced on American soil. A third of a century later, and before a Bible in English was produced, a Prayer Book and many selections from the Scriptures were published by William Bradford, of New York, for the Mohawk tribe of Indians. In the following century, several Bibles were produced in various Indian dialects, all for the one purpose of evangelizing the native Americans.

The first Bible to be printed in America in a literary

language was the Saur Bible, produced in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1743, in German. Christopher Saur came to America in 1724, in search of larger opportunities and greater freedom of thought. Being an earnest religionist, he soon saw the importance of obtaining, without the difficulties involved in importation from the Mother Country, the Lutheran Bible, which his fellow colonists followed. Being a man of enterprise, he set about the task, securing a font of type from a friend in Germany. The paper was made in America, and the Bible was produced in several editions, one of which, that of 1776, is said to have been destroyed by British red-coats, who found it convenient to use it for wadding for their guns. In the preface of the edition of 1763, Saur states "Herewith appears in this American part of the world the Holy Scriptures — called the Bible — publicly printed for the second time in the High German language to the honor of the German nation — inasmuch as no other nation can claim to have printed the Bible in this part of the world in its language." Saur's honest interest may be seen in the wording of a circular which stated that the price of the book was "eighteen shillings, but to the poor and needy we have no price" (*The Guiding Light on the Great Highway*, p. 266, Robert R. Dearden, Jr.).

The ease, because of frequent communication with England, of securing a generous supply of Bibles from the Mother Country, retarded the printing of English Bibles in America. It was no small enterprise to secure the necessary equipment for so formidable a task, and the low price of those imported discouraged the project from a business standpoint. Not until an emergency arose did the printing of the Bible in America become a necessity. When the disagreement which arose between England and her American Colonies became acute, it was found that among other commodities which could justifiably be

brought from the Mother Country was the supply of Bibles necessary to meet the increasing demands due to the growth of population. As disagreements were intensified, the attention of the Congress then convening in Philadelphia was attracted to the situation.

Congress was petitioned to aid in meeting the emergency, and a committee of that body reported adversely on the proposition of printing Bibles in America, for reasons advanced before — the difficulty in securing the necessary equipment and materials. Accordingly, it was recommended to the Congress that a large number of Bibles be imported from England. The resolution was adopted, with five dissenting colonies, however, among which were New York and Virginia. It does not appear that the undertaking was successful. But the need was met in another direction.

A Scotsman, Robert Aitken by name, then residing in Philadelphia, seeing the difficulty, entered upon the business of printing the King James Version. At first, parts of the Bible were printed, but by 1782 the complete Scriptures were published. Aitken then sought the approval of Congress, and the chaplains of the two houses were requested to examine Aitken's work and, if found worthy, to give it "the sanction of your judgment, the weight of your recommendations." In reply, after due examination of the Bible in question, the two chaplains, George Duffield and William White, reported favorably upon the accuracy of the translation as to its sense, and the reasonable correctness of the text. Thus even under the constrictions imposed by war, the people in America found themselves adequately supplied with the Holy Scriptures. This is another example of the Word of God having been supplied to the people even under severely adverse circumstances.

Other printings of the Bible soon followed in Phila-

delphia and Trenton. In 1791, in Worcester, appeared the "Thomas" Bible, the first printed in Massachusetts, that is, in English. Isaiah Thomas developed a large printing industry, and his copies of the Scriptures were in workmanship far superior to any that had gone before.

The business of printing Bibles now became common, and by the opening of the 19th century, nearly two score different publishers were engaged in the work. The first copy of the Vulgate, the Douai version, appeared in Philadelphia in 1790, bearing the imprint of Matthew Carey as publisher. So satisfied was he with his work that he solicited the patronage of Protestants as well as Roman Catholics. In New York, the first complete Bible appeared in 1792, known as the Self-Interpreting Bible, with George Washington heading the list of subscribers. A version of the Bible of special interest was a translation from the Septuagint, made by Charles Thompson, one-time Secretary to the Continental Congress, and published by Jane Aitken in Philadelphia, in 1808. Thompson was long a close student of the Scriptures, and his translation contains many interesting interpretations.

From this time forward, the enterprise grew, expanding to meet the need of the rapidly growing population. The work of Bible making in America begun so laboriously by Eliot, apostle to the Indians, had its crowning effort in the American Revised Version, an account of which appears in the following chapter. The citizens of America have been notably given to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and with the passing years this habit has not lessened. Rather has it been intensified with the new light which every now and again has been shed upon the Sacred pages through the inspiration and revelation of profound scholars.

XXVIII

American Standard and Later Versions

WHEN we contemplate the great place in Christian history filled by the Version of the Bible known as the "Authorized," we may easily forget the vanities which appear in the part played by King James in setting the enterprise on foot. However much he may have desired to satisfy his own self-importance in the undertaking, the result was so monumental as completely to hide the personal idiosyncrasies associated with its beginnings. The Authorized Version was the result of keener insight into subtle meanings and greater scholarly research from a devoted band than had been bestowed upon any other version of the Scriptures. It represented the best scholarship of the time superimposed upon the matchless work of Tyndale and Coverdale, who as we have seen must be regarded as the outstanding factors in the first making of an adequate English Bible.

The success of the enterprise was commensurate with its magnitude. The Authorized Version at once sprang into popularity, which grew for two and a half centuries. But its course at first was by no means one of universal approval. Keen-eyed critics shot their darts even at this excellent presentation of the Scriptures and scarcely three years had passed when a new edition appeared with more than four hundred variorum readings. This edition, however, was not entitled to be called a "revision." However, in 1629, so acute had become the criticism that a revision was brought out embodying, it should be said, a large proportion of the proposed changes and

yet they were so few and unimportant that only the keen-eyed were aware of them. What was known as the final revision of the Authorized Version was published in 1638, and even this did not satisfy the progressive scholarship of the period.

In the Tory Parliament in 1653, a bill was introduced providing for a future revision. The grounds for such a course as presented at the time related in the main to typographical mistakes, some errors in translation, and others in the style of language. It was thought to be too highly prelatiical. But the enterprise got no farther than the preliminary steps. Parliament was dissolved and the project came to an end.

As the Authorized Version gained in popularity, the excellence of the text became increasingly apparent, and criticism waned. To be sure, additions were made in various editions in the form of marginal notes, and the chronology of Bible events as worked out by Bishop Ussher was added in 1701. Into the Oxford Bible were introduced tables of weights, measures, and coins with their values. But the work of the Great Committee held for long against all comers. The Authorized Version with its spiritual insight, its keen poetic sense, its sparkling language, its dignity and majesty had endeared it to an unnumbered host, to whose ranks millions were yearly added.

As the English speaking people became involved in other lines of development, less and less attention was given to criticism of the established Version. Bible scholars gave more attention to doctrine and to the philosophy of religion than to the Bible language. With the advance of the 19th century new inventions together with social, educational, and political developments very largely absorbed the thought of the people. But one line of education was giving careful attention to the ancient tongues.

Philology was developing. Textual and historical methods of criticism were unfolding. The meaning of words was changing. The general effect of all these tendencies was to uncover certain defects in the well-loved Bible, defects that grew so great in both numbers and importance that finally to meet the new conditions an effort at revision became a necessity.

The discovery of highly important manuscripts of the Bible lent a zest to the enterprise. The significance of this is seen in the fact that four of the earliest, the most complete manuscripts, and now regarded as the most valuable, were quite unknown to the King James translators. The new light shed upon the Scriptures must be recognized. Textual criticism had grown into an art if not into a science. Moreover, many facts had taken on meanings very unlike the accepted significance at the beginning of the 17th century. The English language had also grown to an extent that enabled the Bible scholars to express the sentiment of the ancient tongues with far greater accuracy. All of these reasons increasingly intensified the demand for a revision of the Authorized Version. And the work must be done with due respect for its magnitude and importance.

Tyndale in his first edition stated the case clearly as to the duty of Bible scholars of his own time engaged in translating the Scriptures in these words: "that if they perceive in any place that the version has not attained unto the very sense of the tongue or the very meaning of Scripture, or has not given the right English word, that they should put to their hands and amend it, *remembering that so is their duty to do.*" (Smyth, "How We Got Our Bible," p. 135.) As indicative of the growing sentiment among scholars that the time was ripe for a revision, several partial revisions were brought out.

The general movement came to a head in 1870 when

Bishop Wilberforce in the Upper House of the Southern Conference offered a resolution proposing that a committee be appointed to confer with the Convocation of the Northern Province, to examine and report on the desirableness of undertaking a revision of "the Authorized Version of the New Testament, whether by marginal notes or otherwise, in all those . . . passages where plain and clear errors, in the Greek text . . . shall on due investigation be found to exist."

In June of the same year a group of scholars, distinguished for their knowledge of the Bible and the original tongues, gathered in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey to give consideration to the task. Among the body were Bishop Ellicott, Westcott, Hort, Eadie, Archbishop Trench, and other eminent scholars. In order that the revision should be representative of the best learning, selections of the personnel were made from the various schools of thought. The presence of Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican churchmen gave warrant that the work would not be undertaken in a limited or sectarian sense.

To interest the scholarship of America as well as to insure the support of the religious thought of their country in the enterprise, at the request of Bishop Ellicott, who headed the English Committee, Dr. Angus visited America. A plan of joint action was framed and a list was made of the most eminent Bible scholars in America. The English Bible Committee approved this list and in December 1871, a body of thirty American scholars was organized and began work in the following autumn on both the Old and New Testaments. The work went slowly forward so carefully was it done. While the scholars who prepared the revised King James Version took one thousand days to complete their work on the Old Testament, in the later enterprise the revisers of the Old Testament

were at their task for fourteen years. The New Testament group because of their smaller task, took four years less to complete their revision. The Revised New Testament appeared in May 1881 and was received with keenest expectancy on both sides of the Atlantic.

Publication of the Revised Version of the New Testament began at midnight on May 16, 1885. Its immediate sale was unprecedented. The attempted clarification of many passages of the King James Version at first gave satisfaction both to students of the Bible and to the general public as well. But its success was not complete. As more careful examination was made of the more than thirty-six thousand changes from the text of the Authorized Version in the New Testament alone, many of which were awkward and not wholly clear, satisfaction with the new text lessened. It was found that many of the changes were trifling, textual rather than doctrinal, and all combined they wrought no substantial disagreement in the fundamental teachings of the Scriptures.

The changes made in the Old Testament were fewer in number. The one notable difference from the 1611 Version was the printing of certain passages in the form of poetry, a change which seems more nearly to represent the true sentiment of the authors. On the whole, the Revised Version has not attained to great popularity. Its sale at present is not large compared with the Authorized Version, and there is little indication that there will be a revival of interest in its departure from the truly magnificent language brought out by the King James revisers.

But what of the work of the American Committee that collaborated with the English group? The agreement made between the two companies provided that the English group should have the authority of decision where differences arose regarding meanings and translations. In return for this agreement, the British group agreed to

publish under certain conditions, the preferences of the Americans as an Appendix in all copies of the Revised Version which should be printed for fourteen years. In recognition of this provision, the American Committee agreed to refrain from having any part in or giving sanction to the publication of any other version than that produced by the University presses of any land.

The thought was held by the American Committee that these preferences might be finally incorporated in the text of the Revised Version, but soon after the first issue of the complete Bible in 1885, the British Committee disbanded, and no steps were taken by the English presses to amalgamate the American notes with the text as first agreed upon. On the other hand, the American Committee retained its organization, and when it became evident that their notes and references which had appeared, in part at least, in the Appendix of the Revised Edition were not to be incorporated in the text, they set out to make a recension of the Revised Version which should represent the best available American scholarship. The work, it was found, was much more than a mere incorporation of the notes of the Appendix in the text. The notes themselves were in need of revision. Accordingly, a review was made of the complete Revised Version, and finally published in 1901. This version has been favorably received by scholars in general, and in America has attained a popularity quite in excess of the Revised Version. The title page, as issued in 1901, bears this inscription: "The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments, Translated out of the original Tongues, Being the version set forth in A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities, and revised A.D. 1881-1885, Newly Edited by the American Revision Committee, A.D. 1901. American Standard Version."

In the problem of language, the American Committee

refrained from making radical changes. Certain forms now regarded as archaic were discarded for modern forms of speech. Such expressions, for example, as "howbeit," "the which," "for to," "how that," have generally given place to modern usage. The Committee, however, ever conscious that in revising the version of 1611, they were dealing with a "venerable monument of English usage," never went farther than to clarify passages in the light of modern knowledge, and to replace forms that to modern eyes seem uncouth.

Running headlines appear at the top of the pages, drawn for the most part from the text. Variant readings are placed at the foot of the pages containing the text to which they refer. As the rule obtained in the Committee that no preference should supplant a word or passage of the 1611 version unless approved by two-thirds of the revisers, it follows that often a footnote expresses the opinion of a majority, while not reaching the approval of the requisite two-thirds necessary for its incorporation in the text. The word "Comforter" in John 14 is a notable example of this ruling.

Excellent as was the work of these committees, the task was not finished. Discovery in recent years of many early manuscripts of the Bible, increased knowledge of the ancient languages, especially of New Testament Greek and Aramaic, have prompted individual scholars to translate the Scriptures. The result has been the publication of numerous versions of both Old and New Testaments, and the end is not yet, for new translations are appearing not infrequently. Among the most notable of these are the New Testament translations by Rotherham, Farrar Fenton and Weymouth, in England; by Moffat, Goodspeed, Torrey, and others, in America. Without doubt, each translation has made some contribution in the clarifying of the texts, especially of the Gospels. All are not of

equal merit, however. Yet all have been earnestly, if not laboriously accomplished. Professor Torrey of Yale University published a version of the Four Gospels, after having constructed a background in the Aramaic tongue, as he is convinced that this was the original language of the Scriptures. Rev. George M. Lamsa, a Syrian scholar, has translated the Gospels from the Aramaic text, the Peshitta. He holds the Aramaic to have been the language of the earliest manuscripts. Mr. Lamsa has now completed a commentary on more than three hundred passages of the New Testament, which he claims corrects serious mistakes in all the translations made from the Greek. There is a sharp difference of opinion regarding this work, but it must be admitted that many of his explanations seem accurate when viewed in the light of Eastern manners and customs.

While modern translations of the Bible shed new light upon many passages, they rarely, if ever, supplant the Authorized Version in the hearts of the people. The reason for this is evident. The later translators, in their effort to give a wholly literal rendition, often use a vernacular lacking almost wholly the rhythmical cadence and beauty which characterize many passages of the 1611 edition. Charm of expression is sacrificed for literalness, a situation more important to the scholar, than to the lay reader. No other period of history has produced so high a type of English as the Elizabethan, that is, the Shakespearean period. That the translators of the King James Version were accustomed to this form of expression is manifest throughout their works. In stateliness, in directness of expression, in beauty of form, it is without parallel.

No modern translator has aimed to excel or even to equal the inherent grace of the text of the Authorized Version. Furthermore, the devoutness of that ancient company, their keen spiritual insight, their exalted view

of the sacred character of their work, resulted in an understanding of the true purpose of the message of the Scripture teachings which has not always been reached in the modern translations. This, alone, gives to their work a value which it is probable will stand unchallenged for centuries to come.

XXIX

Authorized Version as Literature

OF A NECESSITY, these chapters have dealt with the genesis of the English Bible, that is, with the Scriptures as first written and their translation into the English language. This chapter will deal with the Authorized Version from the standpoint of its literary value.

Quite naturally, it seems, the reader of the Scriptures becomes so intent upon the message conveyed that he may think but slightly, if at all, of the quality of the language in which the thought is clothed. In consequence, he loses the beauty of their literary forms, which in part, it is fair to say, have never been excelled in English, or any other tongue. As a literary work, the Bible takes its place with the greatest of classic literature, whether Greek or Roman, and it is not excelled by the best passages in Dante's "Divine Comedy" or the "Paradise Lost" of Milton.

It cannot be contended, however, that the language of the Bible is uniform in its literary quality. Far from it! Much of the narrative is commonplace. To counterbalance this, however, the sublimity of many passages with their inherent beauty, grace, and rhythm convey the priceless Truth in a manner that appeals most directly and most deeply to the human heart. The language fittingly conveys the message. Literature is never truly great unless it conveys exalted thought, some universal truth. Given sublime Truth, the manner of its expression determines its place in literature. The Authorized Version of the Scriptures presents a unique union of great

thoughts, often wrought out of the fires of great tribulations, set by deep spiritual yearning and a profound understanding of the priceless value of the message, plus a literary style which attains to the very mountain peak of sublimity of written English.

Profound ideas dealing with the greatest of all problems, revealed through the spiritualized mental state of the Hebrew Prophets, stimulated the translators of the 1611 version to a style of expression which adequately sets forth the precious import of its message. Nothing in the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, nothing in the Greek or Aramaic of the New, makes the appeal that is found in many passages of the Authorized Version. Great ideas revealed to the seers and Prophets of the "Chosen People," found their highest expression not in their original form, but when conveyed in the best form of "King's English." What could surpass in dignity the story of creation? It is matchless, wholly in keeping with the grandeur of its subject. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What simplicity, yet what strength of expression! What could excel the sublimity of the opening verses of the nineteenth Psalm? "The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." Professor Dinsmore, in his volume, "The English Bible as Literature," has pointed out that an excellent test of the quality of Biblical literature is to undertake to express the thought of some exalted passage in one's own language. What could be more dignified than the second verse of the ninetieth Psalm, which he compares with its rendition in modern verses: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God." An English poet has undertaken the task of reproducing the sentiment of this passage thus:

*"O God, the Rock of Ages
Who ever more hast been,
What time the tempest rages
Our dwelling place serene.
Before the first creations,
O Lord, the same as now,
To endless generations,
The everlasting Thou."*

Even a modest critic would scarcely accept this rendition, excellent as it is, as comparable with the Psalmist's words, although it conveys the sentiment sprung from a profound conviction of God's eternal existence. —

Again, the language of the familiar twenty-third Psalm brings its message home with a comfort and assurance that all is well. Its form of expression perfectly conveys its message: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Such sentiment could come only from a pastoral people whose simple faith made possible the sense of oneness with the Father, who eternally provides for all His children. The gentle words of Jesus conveying his tender appeal to accept the Christ as the way out of human tribulation could scarcely be equaled in their simplicity, and surely not in their import: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How perfectly in these few short words is the promise of salvation brought to weary humanity, heavily laden with the burdens imposed by the hardest of taskmasters, material sense. Could so important a message have a more fitting vehicle of expression? Or what could excel the assurance, the spiritual comfort, conveyed in these words which fell from the lips of Jesus, as recorded by John? "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." How rhythmical, how appealing, yet how simple! No high

sounding phrases, no polysyllables! But in the briefest terms is conveyed an appeal that has comforted millions of distressed throughout the Christian centuries.

Jesus was not a philosopher, that is, he reasoned not from premise to conclusion, as did the Greeks. His method of imparting his teachings was by the direct declaration. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," an assertion without a reason presented for the statement. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "The words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life." "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." These words are from one who spoke with supreme authority — direct, forceful, compelling. Never have so great truths been uttered; and their form was in exact conformity with their importance.

Jesus was essentially a poet, for he dealt with the subjects which the poetic vision fashions into beautiful, rhythmical sentences. The sky, the lilies, the birds, the shepherd, the sheep — these were the objects from which he drew his appealing parables. But he was more than a poet. He was a dramatist, as well. No more dramatic scene was ever depicted than his dealing with the woman taken in adultery. The contrast set forth is one of the most striking of all literature. His marvellous insight into human nature enabled him to turn a case of apparent, inescapable fault into an opportunity to exhibit the perfect healing of sin.

And narrative also has its place in the teachings of this marvellous man. The story of the prodigal is not excelled in its perfect artistry. A complete story is told in scarcely more than five hundred words, and without describing the personages concerned except as they are pictured by their own words. While Jesus wrote nothing, so far as it is known, the Gospel accounts of his words and works,

recorded by faithful disciples and followers, are unique in the field of literature. And the translators from Tyndale have served a great purpose in embodying the spirit of the message in language which hides not the original beauty, but rather enhances it.

Perhaps no better test of the perfect literary form of much of the Bible text could be made than to compare it with modern renditions, where the desire of the translators to convey the literal meaning has been uppermost. Take for example the familiar passages from the Master's sayings: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. . . . And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." . . . Surely, there is no obscurity of the thought which Jesus wished to convey, and the literary form could hardly be improved. Yet a modern translator, undertaking to clarify the meaning and to improve its form, set forth the passage in these terms: "Look at the birds which fly in the air! They do not sow or reap or store up in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. . . . And why be anxious about clothing? Learn a lesson from the wild lilies. Watch their growth."

I submit that the effort to clarify and reduce to modern speech this sublime passage accomplishes nothing except to destroy the beautiful cadences manifest in the exquisite choice of words of the translators of the King James Version.

The account of Jesus' raising of Lazarus is set forth in terms which perfectly convey one of the most important events ever described in words. Little wonder that the Nazarene, stirred to the depth of his nature at the evidence of lack of understanding of his message, wept. No misunderstanding here, no need for clarification. No words could convey the facts more definitely, yet one

modern version translates the passage, "Jesus burst into tears," while another renders it, "Jesus shed tears." These are but a few of many instances where the stately, direct, cadent, yet simple language of the Authorized Version has failed of improvement in the modern versions. It is safe to say that the literary form of many portions of the King James Version stands, and will stand, as the highest example of pure English.

The Hebrew race was possessed of spiritual consciousness above all other ancient peoples. They were more intent upon finding and serving God than any of their contemporary races. Their joys and triumphs, as well as their failures and sorrows, often found expression in poetic forms. Drama found a vehicle in Job; spiritual insight in Isaiah and all the prophets, great and small. Allegory is represented in Jonah, and exposition in the form of letter writing reached a high mark in the Epistles of Paul and John. Revelation came to one who had learned true worship from the Founder of Christianity; biography attained great heights in the Four Gospels. Narrative and history also found their place in this compendium of literary styles. All these forms of literature have reached an excellence of expression in the King James Version, which stands unrivalled as the greatest monument to the sublime possibilities of the English language.

A book to be great must have a great purpose. The Holy Bible has the highest of all purposes, to save poor humanity from its slavery to sin, sickness, and death, by bringing to it the realization that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

XXX

Language of the Early Bibles

THE earliest manuscripts of the Bible were written in Hebrew, as this was the language both of the people and of the learned men as well. It remained as the literary language even as late as the writing of Ecclesiastes, that is, until the beginning of the third century B.C. The first departure from this usage was the appearance of certain portions of the ancient Scriptures in Aramaic, for example, parts of Daniel, Ezra 6:8, 18; 7:12-26. But Hebrew continued to be the language of scholars and of the priestly class because it was the language in which the books of the Bible were first written. In the late centuries before Christ, and during the early years of the Christian Era, when these books were read in the synagogues, it was customary to interpret them in Aramaic, for the masses no longer understood the original Hebrew tongue. Out of this custom grew the Targums, the paraphrases or explanations of the Hebrew Scriptures. The use of Aramaic manuscripts in the synagogues was strictly forbidden on the ground that the translation might not have accurately represented the original text; and not until the Christian Era was well advanced were the Targums written in definite form. It should be recalled that at this time there was no "Bible," that is, no collection of books incorporated in a single volume. Each "book" was a roll by itself, and among the rolls used in the synagogues were several books that were not finally included in the Canon of the Old Testament; and the Canon as we have learned

was not finally determined until near the end of the first century.

The Samaritan Bible, that is, the Samaritan Pentateuch, furnishes somewhat of a variant from the above situation. These manuscripts were written in characters derived from the more ancient form of Hebrew, in use more than two thousand years before the Jews adopted the square form of letters. This form of characters helps to fix the date of the Samaritan version, since manifestly it was written before the adoption of the square characters, the form of Hebrew in later use. The fact, also, that the Samaritan Bible contains only the Pentateuch further proves an early date, before the Prophets and the Writings were regarded as authentic.

With the conquest of Alexandria, the Greek language was widely used, and became the language not only of the learned class, but of the common people as well, throughout a large portion of the conquered domain. The translation of the Bible into Greek in the Septuagint Version made the Scriptures accessible to Gentile races who knew no Hebrew, and thus gave great impetus to their dissemination. Even the masses in Palestine had learned something of the Greek language. Hence the Septuagint reached a wide field of readers, wider probably than had the Hebrew originals. That Jesus was familiar with Hebrew is evident from his ability to read the rolls of Scripture which were presented to him in the various synagogues where he taught. That he was familiar with Aramaic, the common language of the day, is also apparent, for the Gospels still retain something of his original words in that language. Phrases like "Talitha cumi," "Ephphatha" and "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani" are pure Aramaic. Scholars who have given much time to study of the problem are convinced that Jesus also knew Greek, which had become the language of scholars and of

many of the common people as well. At the trial of Jesus, while the soldiers of Herod may have spoken Aramaic, it is certain that the language of Pilate was Greek. Moreover, from the Gospel story, there is no indication that Jesus' words to Pilate were not in the same tongue. That the Sanhedrim or Council regarded Peter as unlettered appears from Acts 4: 13. Yet it is almost certain that his address on the day of Pentecost was in Greek, and further evidence in Acts points to the certainty that Paul also spoke both Greek and Aramaic. The conclusion is warranted that Palestine was bilingual, and that outside Palestine the prevailing language was Greek throughout much of the Roman world.

A fact not generally recognized is that there was a Christian Church before there was a New Testament. The Christian Church grew out of the evangelical work of actual witnesses to the life and works of Christ Jesus, and of others who, like Paul, accepted the statements of disciples as wholly authentic. The books of the New Testament were an outcome of the Master's teachings as interpreted and recorded by his personal followers and converts. These earliest writings, of which no least trace remains, were written, as we have seen, in response to the needs of evangelists in spreading the new religion and also out of a growing conviction that, as the expected second coming of the Messiah did not immediately eventuate, a record should be made of his words and works while memory was clear regarding them. Paul's famous letters — letters, to be sure, to which no reply was expected — were personal exhortations to groups wherein he had sown seeds of the new doctrine. Among these converts they became interpretations of the teachings of Jesus. Thus they are better classified as epistles than merely as letters. Undoubtedly Paul's communications were written in Greek, as that was the language of Asia

Minor at that period and of some other countries visited by the enterprising Apostle.

As to the language of the first draft of the Gospels, the case is not so clear. Were they Aramaic or were they Greek? Consensus of the best scholarly opinion seems to be that there were original writings in Aramaic which formed the background of the Gospels. These were written at an early date, not unlikely by witnesses and auditors of the words and works of the Master. What could be more probable than that a listener to his inspired words and that witnesses to his marvellous works should have hastened to record the facts? It is also generally held that the earliest extant manuscripts from which our New Testament has been translated are in Greek. Some scholars, however, are convinced that the original writings were in Aramaic. Professor Torrey of Yale, while translating the Gospels from the Greek, as we have learned, constructed a background in Aramaic, in order to insure the accuracy of his translations. But there is no doubt among scholars that the New Testament Epistles have come to us in their original Greek tongue.

It may cause surprise that, since the books of the New Testament were all written by Jews, none of them were written in the Hebrew language. Hebrew was the language of the very sacred Scriptures, and to have vested the new teachings, not as yet generally accepted, in the same tongue seemed unwarranted, if not sacrilegious. We forget, perhaps, how humble were the beginnings of Christianity, how small was the group, how undeveloped its ritual and polity. Moreover, Aramaic and Greek had largely superseded Hebrew as the common tongue. So general had become the use of the Greek language that even in Palestine it was the language of government, of business, and of religion, for the Septuagint Version was

in extensive use as the authoritative version of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Thus it follows that the relative position of Greek and Aramaic as the languages of the earliest writings of the New Testament, that is, of the Gospels, is still an unsettled problem. This, however, is certain. Recent discoveries in Egypt of a considerable mass of papyri in the same Greek as that of the earliest extant manuscripts of the New Testament has greatly simplified the problem. Careful study of the language of these old papyri has furnished a basis of comparison with that of the New Testament, a most illuminating experience. Where formerly it was held that the Greek of the New Testament, the *Koine*, was a form peculiar to these writings, it is now found that it was the colloquial Greek of that day, the Greek of everyday life. Many scholars hold the conclusion as inevitable that the writers of the New Testament, in general, composed their books in the language of the people, in the common tongue of the times. "Themselves sprung from the common people, the disciples of one whom the common people heard gladly, they in turn wrote in that common tongue to be understood of the people" (Christianity in the Light of Common Knowledge, p. 282).

New Testament Greek differs somewhat from the classic language of Athens and even more widely from the language of modern Greece. It seems to have been an intermediate step in the development of a classic language from a highly literary form to the less stylistic but more elastic stage of modern Greek.

The efforts on the part of many scholars to delete certain "Hebraisms" or "Semiticisms" on the ground that they were not pure Greek are lessening in volume. In the commendable work of defending these forms, the re-

cently discovered Greek papyri containing contemporaneous accounts of the affairs of the day have rendered much assistance. It is not anomalous that Jewish writers — and all the authors of the New Testament books were Jews, and one, at least, whose mother tongue was Aramaic — should have introduced words, expressions, and idioms from their familiar language. And moreover, with the Evangelists — at least with Matthew and Mark — the Greek documents were produced from Aramaic papers, now lost. That Paul drew from the Septuagint is generally accepted. Hence it is wholly logical that he should now and again fall into the Hebraic thought behind the Septuagint, the Bible with which he was so familiar. This tendency is not unlike the modern user of the Authorized Version who inadvertently perhaps, but none the less surely, falls into the language of that Version, even though some of its forms are now regarded as archaic. The fact that the text of the Septuagint was strongly impregnated with the thought and expressions of its Hebraic source, accounts for the appearance of many of these forms in the Greek of the New Testament.

XXXI

Papyrus and Parchment

THE student of early Biblical writings finds them recorded, for the most part, upon two materials, papyrus and parchment, both widely used in very early times. As the art of paper making was not discovered until the 8th or 9th century, A.D., papyrus and parchment were, during the preceding centuries, in general use for both literary and business purposes. Just when papyrus came into use is not known, but it was probably one of the first materials in general use.

The writing material termed papyrus was made from the papyrus plant, or reed, growing along the banks of the Nile Delta. It grew in shallow water to a height of five or six feet, and many shoots sprang up from the widely spreading main roots. It is said to be now extinct in Lower Egypt, but is still found along the upper reaches of the Nile and in Ethiopia. Papyrus writing material was made from the thin slices of the stem placed side by side. A first layer of these slices was placed vertically to a width of about eight or nine inches. Across this other strips were arranged horizontally. The sheet thus formed was then dipped in the water of the Nile and pounded with a wooden mallet until the two layers adhered. Then it was smoothed and dried for use. It is not known whether the water in which it was dipped had a chemical effect upon the fiber of the strips which caused them to adhere, or whether their compactness was due to the application of glue or paste. At any rate, the result was a sheet of material which for centuries served the purpose

of paper. Upon this crude material was written much of the early literature of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and, of even greater importance, the first records of the Biblical literature, which we now have in such abundance because of the discovery of the art of paper making and the invention of printing.

The papyrus plant served many useful purposes for the ancients other than in paper making. Its pith was used for food, either raw or cooked. Its root, which was firm and strong, was used for fuel and also in the fashioning of implements and utensils. From the stem were made mats, sails, and even boats, its uses approximating those of bamboo at the present time. The Greek historian, Heroditus, tells of the use of papyrus in making shoes for the priests, and of its use as tow is now used in caulking wooden ships. All in all, the papyrus plant was a most important product of the low-lying lands of the Nile Delta. Ancient Scripture represents the making of boats, light skiffs, from the papyrus plant, and it is probable that these were known to the inhabitants of Palestine, as Isaiah, in 18:2, refers to the land "which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes." It is evident, however, that the use of writing material made of skins of animals developed with the use of papyrus, as Heroditus refers to the introduction of the latter into Ionia, where it was known as "skins," referring, apparently, to the material they had commonly used for writing.

After the papyrus sheet had been dried and sufficiently integrated to form a compact surface, it was smoothed and polished by rubbing with ivory or a shell. The quality varied considerably, as did the size of the sheet. The sheets when duly prepared were fastened together by paste or glue into a "roll," consisting usually of not more than twenty sheets. It was now ready for the vendor,

who sold it as pads of paper are now supplied to the writing public. It is said that almost invariably the best sheets were on the outside of the roll, the poorest near the center. Apparently some of the same sales methods were then in vogue that are in use at the present day.

Papyrus was used by the early writers of the Bible. Many papyri in Greek, usually only in fragments, have been found in recent years, mostly in Egypt, where the dry climate is especially favorable to their preservation. Some of these recent findings are very important, as they shed much light on the early texts of the Bible. The fragment recently found in a bookshop in Alexandria is believed to be a bit of a second century Gospel containing new sayings of the Founder of Christianity. The enduring quality of papyrus has made possible the preservation of great volumes of literature of the early Christian centuries, which with a less durable material would have disappeared altogether. The quality of the ink used by these ancient scribes is the wonder of the present day world, for its indelible quality makes legible manuscripts inscribed with it after eighteen hundred years.

Another substance used for writing as we use paper was parchment, or vellum, as the finer qualities were termed. From very early times — long before the Christian Era — parchment was in use, and early Bible records were written on this material. The skins of calves, sheep, and goats were dried, scraped clean of flesh and wool, or hair, and carefully stretched on a proper frame. At first but one side was prepared for use, but later as skill in preparing the skins advanced and the demand grew, both sides were dressed, and their usefulness thus doubled. The codex resulted from the invention of the two-sided parchment.

As the art of parchment making progressed, the skins of young animals were more commonly used, making

a high grade of vellum. This became by far the most popular material. So skillful did the artisans in this enterprise become that a fine, thin texture of vellum was developed, crisp, and almost as smooth as paper, yet firm and glossy. Many of the early manuscripts written on vellum were beautifully illuminated until they became works of art. Extant copies of the early Bible manuscripts are so skillfully printed and so beautifully illustrated with drawings in colors, that they are eagerly sought for their artistic value as well as for the importance of their messages. The art of dyeing the vellum in a color of rich purple was at one time in vogue, and upon this beautiful fabric, as early as the third century A.D., the Scriptures were written in letters of silver and gold. So highly developed became the art of making these artistically illustrated manuscripts of the Bible that it was finally denounced by prominent religionists as extravagant and wasteful. In his preface to the book of Job, Jerome vigorously expressed his opinion of this useless luxury.

Among the extant manuscripts of the Bible written and illuminated in this manner are the Gospels in the Old Latin Version, dating probably from the fourth century. In the Imperial Library, at Vienna, is a famous codex of Genesis, also the Patmos manuscript of the Gospel in Greek, similarly prepared. In several other European libraries are preserved these highly prized writings, dating from the 5th to the 15th century. The art of writing and illuminating these manuscripts was developed to a marvellous degree of excellency, an art which, after the advent of printing, disappeared because no longer required. Before the 4th century, most Christian manuscripts were written on papyrus, and in earliest times these were formed into a roll. With the perfection of vellum, the codex replaced the roll. With the Old Testament manuscripts, the papyrus or parchment

was attached at each end to a stick, upon which it was rolled.

When the use of parchment became general, to promote economy, often a writing was erased by rubbing the surface with some hard substance, or by removing the ink with acid. This was possible only with parchment, as papyrus did not lend itself to this process. The material thus utilized was termed a palimpsest. Tablets covered with a thin layer of wax were also in use for unimportant and temporary messages, as this substance could be easily removed for further use. It is said that the word "sincere" has its root meaning "without wax," from the Latin *sine cera*, a significance which arose from the custom of inscribing a message with some substance not easily erased or removed, that is, without wax, and therefore permanent.

Biblical Criticism

UNFORTUNATELY, the meaning commonly attached to the word "criticism" implies harsh, captious, or unfriendly judgment. This is an inference that is not justified, however, for the word in its primal sense signifies merely a judgment, a sound opinion passed by one competent to determine the truth in a given case or upon a given subject, without reference to the attitude expressed, whether friendly or unfriendly. The tendency to attach an unfriendly nuance to the word has too commonly arisen with Biblical criticism, the assumption having been that to criticize the Sacred Scriptures was primarily an effort to discredit them. Fortunately, this conclusion has no foundation in fact, for some of the most ardent Christians and lovers of the Bible have given years of careful study to the minutiae of the textual construction, literary qualities, and historical values of the Scriptures. This work has been carried on with unflinching patience and unremitting care, and its results have been highly beneficial in clarifying, co-ordinating and strengthening the message of the Bible.

Biblical criticism is usually classified under three heads, textual, literary, and historical. Textual criticism consists of the examination and comparison of the original texts of the Bible, word by word, verse by verse, and paragraph by paragraph, after verses and paragraphs were introduced. It really began with the Massoretes, that group of scholars who undertook to develop the original consonantal text of the earliest Hebrew manuscripts by adding the vowel points and divisions that the sense seemed

to demand. As originally written, the text was neither divided into words nor sentences. To the critics, then, fell the task of adding the yowels and of dividing the letters into words and sentences. It may be illustrated thus: The familiar verse, Genesis 32:24, would read: NDJCBWSLFTLNNDTHRWRSTLDMNWT HHMNTLBRKNGFHDY (all capitals and no divisions between the letters). The value of this work can scarcely be overestimated, for out of it came much clarification as to the meaning of the earliest Scriptures.

The work of textual examination thus begun has been continued by individuals and groups of scholars to the present day. Many translators of the Bible have carried on a most searching examination and comparison of the various earliest available manuscripts in order to determine the exact words of the original authors.

Even the effort has been made where it is believed the original text was in Aramaic to reconstruct that original, using for that purpose the early Greek manuscripts and the notes and quotations of early commentators, who were not far removed in time from the original authors. A complication for the scholar arises from the fact that neither in the Greek nor Latin manuscripts was there a uniformity of text until the invention of printing. The Syriac texts presented less of variation than either of the others.

To arrive at the precise form of statement in the original has also been the work of the textual critic, and so involved is the task that years of patient and faithful study have been spent upon it, both by individuals, groups, and schools of critics working together. An example of this work, as we have seen, is furnished in the discussion of the closing of Mark's Gospel. One group contends that the original manuscript ended with 16:8. Another group claims that there was a brief ending be-

yond the 8th verse to round off the chapter. This was true of the oldest and best Latin texts. Another group, and apparently supported by the most reliable authority, holds to the concluding statements as presented in the Authorized Version. Determination of the facts in the case has been the occasion for intensive study by Biblical scholars for centuries.

The great importance of establishing an authoritative text of the Scriptures is apparent. The work, however, is not yet complete even though it has been carried on for centuries. This textual phase of Biblical criticism, sometimes called the "Lower Criticism," readily co-ordinates with the next step, the Literary Criticism, which is known as the "Higher Criticism." The latter deals with literary values of the Scriptures, and their values depend largely upon a reliable and authoritative text, the text of the original writings. This type of study is concerned with determining the purpose of the various books of the Bible, the *raison d'être* of their production, their scope, that is, the ground covered by each, their character as to style and form. It must also determine the time of writing and the circumstances under which each was produced, its authorship, whether written by one or several collaborators, their identity, and if they were persons after whom the book was named. This type of study also investigates the development of each book, was it originally written in its present form; was it an original document, and what were the sources from which its statements were drawn? If a book were drawn from some previous document or source, it is the work of the critic to determine the source and, if necessary, reconstruct it.

This patient and prolonged study has enabled scholars to arrive at conclusions regarding the Gospels as to authorship, sources, time of production, and relationship that in many instances are final and conclusive. There

are still, however, many unsettled problems. The value of such investigation is beyond possibility of estimate. What could be more important in the human experience than exact knowledge of the teachings of the Founder of Christianity, of their significance and authority? A debt of gratitude is due for this work carried on with untiring energy, and with the highest purpose, to establish for the present and future the facts relating to the most important life that has been lived on earth.

Furthermore, no complete understanding of that life is possible without some knowledge of the people, circumstances, and religious beliefs which made possible the appearance of this Messiah, this Saviour of men. Thus it is that "Historical Criticism" comes into use. This type of research aims to find out all that is possible to learn concerning the books of the Bible as to their historical allusions, their statements, historically considered, regarding the people, events, circumstances, customs, methods of worship, and government, as contained in the books themselves. This has been in no small measure a work of comparison and reconciliation of diverse statements found in different books written by different authors. It is in this line of investigation that Archaeology has come to play so important a part. The spade has come to the aid of the historical critic, for many of the Bible accounts which in the past have too often been regarded as allegorical or traditional, are being shown to be accurate narrations of actual happenings. So that with the progress of the textual and literary critics, hand in hand goes the historical searchers for proof of Biblical statements.

Some notable results of the Higher Criticism have been, as we have seen, the discovery that Genesis is made up of two accounts, the "J" and "E"; that the book of Isaiah was only in part written by the prophet of that name; that Psalms was not the work of David alone, but

of many unknown writers; that Solomon as author was not responsible for all of Proverbs, but that the book contains gems of wisdom gathered probably from many sources and ascribed to him because of his reputation for wise sayings and prudent acts. Thus light has been thrown upon a vast number of Biblical instances, and much clarification has resulted. And the grand result of this work has been not to lessen faith in the spiritual import of the Scriptures but rather to strengthen and rationalize the Bible story, thus enhancing its acceptability for all, for the casual reader as well as for the profound student.

Literary Criticism has not been confined to the Scriptures; nor is it a modern enterprise. Classic literature has undergone much the same process of examination as has the Bible, but with less intensity of purpose and by a less number of scholars because of its comparatively less importance. That this examination of ancient writings has had the result of eliminating many spurious passages, there is no doubt. And the net result has been arrival at the actual texts and the true historical facts. So that what has been the result with the Bible has likewise been the outcome with secular literature. To be sure, there have been critics from the time of Celsus who have undertaken to discredit the Bible, and especially to nullify the teachings of Christianity. But through the centuries whenever an attack has been made, there has been raised up some one competent to answer the would-be destroyer. As Celsus had his Origen, so every assailant has met his match. Truth has prevailed. And the work of the constructive critic has gone far in establishing the fundamental facts regarding the Sacred Scriptures, their inception, production, message, and purpose. The Bible is on a firmer foundation than ever because of the devoted labors of the school of critics.

XXXIII

Why the Bible Appeals

CERTAIN facts regarding the most unique of all books require examination. What is the source of the appeal that has occasioned translation of the Bible into nearly a thousand tongues and its distribution in numbers approximating, if not exceeding, a billion copies? From any standpoint of logic, there must be a cogent reason for these facts regarding a book, and one only in the history of all literature for all time, of which they are true. That there is a reason is apparent to all inquirers. The translation into a thousand tongues, and the preparation and distribution of a billion copies of a book, has been due to the unprecedented demand for the Truth which it contains.

For nearly thirty centuries, the Scriptures have answered a longing inherent in the human heart for something higher, holier, and more permanent than is found in the common experience of mankind. This longing, this most poignant of all human desires, has found, and still finds, in the living, palpitating Truth written on the pages of the Bible that which answers the most pertinent of questions, What is God? What is life? What is man, and what is his destiny? All these questions, ever uppermost in thought, find adequate answer in the Scriptures. For this reason, the Book has multiplied because of the very seed within itself until it dominates the Christian world in importance to mankind. However much Christendom may live up to or fall away from its sacred precepts, few

doubt its authority or deny its reliability as the way of life.

A quest of unusual interest to those who are religiously inclined is to trace the growth of the authority and appeal of the concept of God as one Lord, Jehovah, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. We gain a glimpse of monotheism in the dim past in connection with Abraham and his clan. This grew first as tradition, passed on orally from one generation to another until, as we have seen, it found its written form as the Pentateuch, probably in the 9th century B.C., or earlier. In this first written account of creation, and of the story of the Children of Israel in their search for the One God and their acceptance of Him as Lord God who both creates and governs, is found the beginnings of that faith, finally backed by understanding, from which springs the authority of the Bible.

None can gainsay that there is inherent in the human consciousness something that responds to Truth. "As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man." When Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Ezekiel, and the others uttered words of Truth, their hearers recognized the authority of their utterances as coming from a source outside and above the Law-giver and Prophet, even though such recognition was not always followed by obedience. Sometimes the call of the flesh was apparently too strong for the voice of Truth. The truth of Isaiah's words, "Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind is stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3), accepted by those willing and obedient, brought the promised peace. The words of the Prophets, declaring the will and purpose of Jehovah, when obeyed, were fulfilled, and when disobeyed there followed the dire results so graphically foretold. It was inevitable that with an ever clearer concept of God there

should have developed a faith stronger, and ever stronger, in the presence and rule of divine Power.

Down through the centuries of the Old Testament, this faith grew; grew because as their concept of God unfolded their demonstrations became correspondingly certain. And as the prophecies, so clearly and so appealingly set forth of the coming of a Messiah, a living Christ, were fulfilled, those ready to receive him experienced a substantial increase in faith, the outgrowth of a clearer comprehension, a higher concept of God. What formerly they believed, now they knew, because of the mastery of the flesh in all its manifold forms of evil. Sin, sickness, and death were overcome, destroyed, obliterated by this most masterful of men.

What the heart of humanity had so longed for, what it had sought from the beginnings of the race, was now a demonstrated fact. Christ Jesus spoke with authority. Why? Because above all others was he conscious of the divine presence as the Father of all. Because his understanding of divine law and its operation enabled him to annul and overcome the claims of so-called material law and to establish the reign of righteousness in place of discord and misery. He knew the source of the power he utilized. He knew its omnipotence and omnipresence. So complete, so manifestly compelling was his experience, that those ready to receive his message and to understand its import became thoroughly convinced of its genuineness; so convinced were many of his Messiahship that they became his disciples and followers. They recognized and accepted the source of his authority.

The writers of the New Testament caught the spirit of his, Jesus', work, and so breathed their absolute conviction upon the pages of those searching biographies of the Nazarene and into the inspiring messages of the Epistles, that to read them with open mind is to accept their

authority as absolute. Furthermore, additional proof that the words of the Bible were uttered and written by those divinely inspired is found in the manifold results derived from the acceptance and demonstration of its teachings. That there is a power divine and limitless behind these messages has proof in the results of obedience to their commands. It is a rule of logic that a proposition proved is true. This applies no less to religion than to mathematics. Proof has been adduced that the Scriptures tell the truth about God, about creation, about man and the universe. There it stands, and is open and demonstrable to all who turn with simple faith to receive its blessings.

The body of Christians, as a whole, has created a society which maintains its identity, adapting itself to the incessant changes in social needs. In this particular does it differ from other great religions, from Islam, from Buddhism, and Confucianism. And it may be said that the slow response to the progress of civilization in the countries adhering to those forms of worship is largely due to the holding to traditions not based upon divine Principle, not founded in God who is infinite Mind. Their sacred books are lacking in the presentation of a demonstrable Principle, whose presence breathes so definitely through the pages of the Bible. And while the critics of Christian civilization (so-called) may cite the tragic experiences of the World War and the present unsettled condition of the Christian world, as far from Christianity, yet the answer may be returned that it is not the lack of authority in the fundamentals of Christianity that has produced such dire results, but rather lack of application of their teachings: it is due to failure to accept the expressions of divine authority which are the foundation stones of Christianity. It is a modern example of the results of disobedience to the operation of divine law.

And this failure to follow the way so plainly marked out in the Sacred Scriptures seems all the more culpable because of the centuries of progressive revelation and clarification which have passed since the Children of Israel learned the penalties of disobedience.

That revelation has been progressive, the student of the Bible becomes convinced. This does not necessarily imply that God, the divine presence, was not always at hand ready to manifest Himself in His fulness to the receptive mentality. The minds of men were to be prepared to receive the spiritual message through the yielding up of material beliefs. As each succeeding generation rose higher in its spiritual preparedness, an increasingly enhanced revelation of spiritual truth was received. This was the manner of the appearing of Christ Jesus, who beyond peradventure of doubt established divine authority as immanent in the world of human affairs. His revelation reduced to the Science of Christianity in our own time stands as the final demonstrated proof that God has been unfolding in the hearts of men, until in this day and age His authority is understood and its Science discovered for the use of humanity in the search for that salvation which frees from all that limits and restricts human experience. Surely that makes the greatest appeal to mortals which points the way of escape from mortality. This way of escape the Bible makes plain to all who gain the spiritual import of its message, and are ready to follow its straight and narrow, sometimes rugged, but always assured, path.

The leaders of society, men and women who have guided the affairs of states and nations most successfully, have loved the Sacred Scriptures. They have recognized the authority of the Bible, and so recognizing it have striven to obey its precepts. Their faith in a divine Power has found expression in words which are worthy

of our attention, because they have often been wrung from hearts which, severely tried in the fire of circumstances, have emerged triumphant.

The apostle of freedom, William Lloyd Garrison, declared: "Take away the Bible, and our warfare with oppression, and infidelity, and intemperance, and impurity is removed — we have no authority to speak and no courage to act." The Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, believed thoroughly in the immanence of God in human affairs. He loved the Bible, and he said: "That the Almighty does make use of human agencies, and directly intervenes in human affairs, is one of the plainest statements in the Bible." When King James I granted the first charter to the Virginia Company, instructions enjoined the members of the expedition to use all proper means to bring to the native Americans knowledge of and love for the true God as set forth in the Scriptures. And under the privy seal an ordinance issued by the King stated: "That the said presidents, councils, and the ministers should provide that the Word and service of God be preached, planted, and used, not only in the said colonies, but also, as much as might be, among the savages bordering among them, according to the rights and doctrines of the Church of England."

Gladstone, England's eminent statesman, was notably a lover of the Scriptures. When speaking of the Bible, he said: "If asked the remedy for the heart's deepest sorrows, I must point to 'the old, old story,' told in an old, old book, and taught with an old, old teaching, which is the greatest and best gift ever given to mankind." That Washington had a high regard for the Scriptures is evidenced by the profuse quotations therefrom appearing in many of his State papers. He once voiced his love of the Bible in these words: ". . . Above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation has had a meliorating influence

on mankind, and increased the blessings of society." Many statesmen of the United States have publicly declared their faith in God and love for His Word. Jefferson, Adams, Jackson, McKinley, Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, each looked for strength and wisdom to the Source of All Being and found His Word in the Holy Bible.

Robert E. Lee, soldier and educator, proclaimed his dependence upon the Scriptures thus: "The Bible is a book in comparison with which all others in my eyes are of minor importance, and which in all my perplexities and distresses has never failed to give me light and strength." King George V, faithful to the promise made to his mother that he would read the Bible each day, once declared: "It is my confident hope that my subjects may never cease to cherish their noble inheritance in the English Bible, which, in a secular aspect, is the first of national treasures and is, in its spiritual significance, the most valuable thing that this world affords."

Leaders in all walks of life have recognized and acknowledged the human need for the inspiration and heartening derived from study of the Bible. Said Napoleon, "The Bible contains a complete series of acts and of historical men to explain time and eternity. The more I consider the Gospel, the more I am assured that there is nothing there which is not beyond the march of events and above the human mind." A man of quite opposite outlook upon life, John Ruskin, declared: "Everything that I have written, every greatness that has been in any thought of mine, whatever I have done in my life has been simply due to the fact that when I was a child my mother daily read with me a part of the Bible and daily made me learn a part of it by heart."

The present Prime Minister of Great Britain, Stanley Baldwin, voiced his faith in the Scriptures in these

words: "So much of the time in this world we seem to be carrying on our struggle in twilight or fog. Nothing but light from the Bible can lighten that twilight or dispel the fog." Daniel Webster, eminent American statesman, in an oration on a great occasion said: "The Bible is a book of faith, and a book of doctrine, and a book of morals, and a book of religion, of especial revelation from God."

That the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, possessed both unlimited faith in and spiritual understanding of the Scriptures is expressed in the First Tenet of Christian Science (*Science and Health*, p. 497): "As adherents of Truth, we take the inspired Word of the Bible as our sufficient guide to eternal Life."

*On mightier wing, in loftier flight,
From year to year does knowledge soar;
And, as it soars, the Gospel light
Becomes effulgent more and more.*

AND GOD SAID
LET THERE BE LIGHT
AND THERE WAS LIGHT

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